



OKLAHOMA

The Department of Health and community-based organizations in Oklahoma received \$1,289,869 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2007.¹

Oklahoma Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Oklahoma does not require schools to teach sexuality education. However, the state Departments of Education and Health must develop curricula and materials and keep them current. If a school district chooses to teach sexuality education, all curricula and materials must be approved for medical accuracy by the state and by the district superintendent. All materials must also be available to parents for review. In addition, all sexuality education classes must have as one of their primary purposes “the teaching of or informing students about the practice of abstinence.”

Schools are required to provide HIV/AIDS-prevention education. This education must be limited to the “discussion of the disease AIDS and its spread and prevention.” The class must be taught once during either grade five or six, once during grades seven through nine, and once during grades ten through 12. All curricula and materials must be checked for medical accuracy by the Oklahoma Department of Health and must only include “factual medical information for AIDS prevention.” HIV/AIDS education must specifically teach that:

- engaging in homosexual activity, promiscuous sexual activity, intravenous drug use or contact with contaminated blood products is now known to be primarily responsible for contact with the AIDS virus;
- avoiding the activities specified above is the only method of preventing the spread of the virus;
- artificial means of birth control are not a certain means of preventing the spread of the AIDS virus and reliance on such methods puts a person at risk for exposure to the disease; and
- sexual intercourse, with or without condoms, with any person testing positive for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) antibodies, or any other person infected with HIV, places that individual in a high risk category for developing AIDS.

In addition, the *Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) Integrated Curriculum: Health, Safety, and Physical Education* includes standards for HIV/AIDS education in seventh through twelfth grades. These standards require this instruction to:

- investigate and examine current information about HIV/AIDS in order to differentiate related facts, opinions, and myths;
- examine and identify the importance of sexual abstinence in adolescent relationships;

- demonstrate refusal skills (saying “no”), negotiation skills and peer resistance skills related to sexual health;
- analyze the transmission and methods of prevention for STDs and HIV;
- identify risk behaviors and situations involving possible exposure to HIV;
- examine the relationships between injecting drug use (IDU) and contact with contaminated blood products and the transmission of HIV; and
- analyze the efficiency of artificial means of birth control in preventing the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

A school district must provide written notification of all sexuality and HIV/AIDS-prevention classes. Parents or guardians can submit written notification if they do not want their children to participate in such classes. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Oklahoma Statutes 70-11-103.3, 70-11-105.1, and *the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) Integrated Curriculum: Health, Safety, and Physical Education*.

Recent Legislation

Legislation Outlines Requirements for Sexuality Education Provided with State Funding

House Bill 1534, introduced in February of 2007, would require that recipients of state funding that provide information on sex, family planning, pregnancy counseling, or sexually transmitted diseases ensure that such information is medically accurate, factual, age-appropriate and includes information “on both abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases,” including HIV/AIDS. The bill currently resides in the House Committee on Public Health.

Events of Note

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

Oklahoma’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- In 2007, 49% of female high school students and 53% of male high school students in Oklahoma reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 3% of female high school students and 9% of male high school students in Oklahoma 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, 14% of female high school students and 19% of male high school students in Oklahoma 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, 39% of female high school students and 34% of male high school students in Oklahoma 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, 55% of females and 64% of males in Oklahoma 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, 20% of females and 12% of males in Oklahoma 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, 17% of females and 30% of males in Oklahoma 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, 89% of high school students in Oklahoma 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 Oklahoma State Department of Health received \$690,342 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 can be provided in part or in full by local groups. Oklahoma requires sub-grantees to make the required match and provides \$112,652 in state revenue.

There are two sub-grantees in Oklahoma: Oklahoma Family Policy Council and Pushmataha County Health Department. The remaining Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds are used for staff salaries and evaluation.

The Oklahoma Family Policy Council runs the “KEEP (Kids Eagerly Endorsing Purity)” program. The program’s mission is, “(1) to convince as many teens as possible to abstain from sex until marriage, and (2) to present sexual expression within marriage as society’s behavioral standard. KEEP teaches kids that abstinence-until-marriage is the only sure way to avoid STDs, emotional damage and pregnancies.”³

The Oklahoma Family Policy Council uses the *Choosing the Best* abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula. SIECUS reviewed two of the curricula produced by Choosing the Best, Inc.—*Choosing the Best LIFE* (for high school students) and *Choosing the Best PATH* (for middle school students). These reviews found that the curricula name numerous negative consequences of premarital sexuality activity and suggest that teens should feel guilty, embarrassed, and ashamed of sexual behavior. For example, *Choosing the Best LIFE* states that, “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.” *Choosing the Best PATH* says, “Sexual activity also can lead to the trashing of a person’s reputation, resulting in the loss of friends.”⁴

The Pushmataha County Health Department uses *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted) Training*, a popular fear-based curricula, in its abstinence-only-until-marriage programming. SIECUS reviewed *WAIT Training* and 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

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

There is one CBAE grantee in Oklahoma: Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc. There are no AFLA grantees in Oklahoma.

The Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc. is a 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.

Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma arranges “abstinence teas” for eighth grade girls in locations around Oklahoma.⁶ In addition, this grantee provides abstinence-only-until-marriage programs to students in grades 6 through 12 and their parents.⁷

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)
Oklahoma State Department of Health www.health.state.ok.us	\$690,342 federal \$183,332 state	Title V
Oklahoma Family Policy Council www.okfamilypc.org	\$125,000	Title V sub-grantee
Pushmataha County Health Department	\$125,000	Title V sub-grantee
Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc. 2007–2011	\$599,527	CBAE

Adolescent Health Contact⁸

Marilyn Lanphier, RN, MPH
Child Guidance Service
Oklahoma State Department of Health
1000 N.E. Tenth St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73117
Phone: (405) 271-4477

Oklahoma Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

NARAL Pro-Choice Oklahoma
P.O. Box 702503
Tulsa, OK 74170
Phone: (918) 494-9585
www.prochoiceoklahoma.blogspot.com

Oklahoma Religious Coalition for
Reproductive Choice
P.O. Box 35194
Tulsa, OK 74153
Phone: (918) 481-6444
www.okrcrc.org

Planned Parenthood of Arkansas and
Eastern Oklahoma
5780 South Peoria
Tulsa, OK 74105
Phone: (918) 858-5200
www.plannedparenthood.org/arkansas-eastern-oklahoma/index.htm

Planned Parenthood of Central Oklahoma
619 North West 23rd St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73103
Phone: (405) 528-0221
www.ppcok.org

Oklahoma Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Oklahoma Family Policy Council
3908 North Peniel Ave.
Bethany Bank Tower, Suite 100
Bethany, OK 73008
Phone: (405) 787-7744
www.okfamilypc.org

Oklahomans for Life
3105 East Skelly Dr., Suite 605
Tulsa, OK 74105
Phone: (918) 749-5022
www.okforlife.org

Newspapers in Oklahoma⁹

Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise
Newsroom
4125 Nowata Rd.
Bartlesville, OK 74006
Phone: (918) 335-8200
www.examiner-enterprise.com

The Daily Ardmoreite
Newsroom
117 West Broadway
Ardmore, OK 73401
Phone: (580) 223-2200
www.ardmoreite.com

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Enid News and Eagle
Newsroom
P. O. Box 1192
Enid, OK 73702
Phone: (800) 299-6397
www.enidnews.com

The Lawton Constitution
Newsroom
P.O. Box 2069
Lawton, OK 73502
Phone: (580) 353-0620
www.swoknews.com

Muskogee Daily Phoenix
Newsroom
P.O. Box 1968
Muskogee, OK 74402
Phone: (918) 684-2828
www.muskogeephoenix.com

News-Capital & Democrat
Newsroom
P.O. Box 987
McAlester, OK 74502
Phone: (918) 423-1700
www.mcalesternews.com

The Norman Transcript
Newsroom
P.O. Drawer 1058
Norman, OK 73070
Phone: (405) 321-1800
www.normantranscript.com

The Oklahoman
Newsroom
P.O. Box 25125
Oklahoma City, OK 73125
Phone: (405) 475-3311
www.newsok.com

Ponca City News
Newsroom
300 North Third St.
Ponca City, OK 74601
Phone: (580) 765-3311
www.poncacitynews.com

Tulsa World
Newsroom
315 S. Boulder Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74103
Phone: (918) 581-8400
www.tulsaworld.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 Ibid.

⁴ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best LIFE* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000); Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best PATH* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000). For more information, see SIECUS' reviews of *Choosing the Best LIFE* and *Choosing the Best PATH* at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.html>.

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 "Things to Do: Events," *Muskogee Phoenix*, 11 March 2008, accessed 14 March 2008, <http://www.muskogeephoenix.com/thingstodo/local_story_071181541.html>.

⁷ "Pregnancy Resource Center Gets Abstinence Education Grant," *The Daily Ardmoreite*, 28 September 2007, accessed 14 March 2008, <http://www.ardmoreite.com/stories/092807/news_45450.shtml>.

⁸ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

⁹ 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.

O K L A H O M A

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](#).