



### PUERTO RICO

#### **Puerto Rico Sexuality Education Law and Policy**

Puerto Rico’s health education policy asserts that such education should lead students to develop “fundamental habits” for maintaining good health, including “respect for the human body,” in order to develop positive sexual behavior.<sup>1</sup> To this end, the commonwealth provides students with information “to know, understand, and become acquainted with the development of their bodies so that they can assume their sexuality responsibly.”<sup>2</sup> Puerto Rico schools are required to implement sexuality education programs that address the “physiological and emotional aspects of sexual relations,” “family responsibilities,” and the health risks related to sexual relationships.<sup>3</sup>

Puerto Rico 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 Laws of Puerto Rico title III, § 144d.

#### **Recent Legislation**

*SIECUS is not aware of any proposed legislation regarding sexuality education in Puerto Rico.*

#### **Puerto Rico’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note<sup>4</sup>**

- In 2005, 44% of female high school students and 43% of male high school students in Puerto Rico 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 4% of male high school students in Puerto Rico 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, 13% of female high school students and 13% of male high school students in Puerto Rico 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, 35% of female high school students and 32% of male high school students in Puerto Rico 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, 59% of females and 74% of males in Puerto Rico 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, 24% of females and 23% of males in Puerto Rico reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 16% of females and 20% of males in Puerto Rico 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, 88% of high school students in Puerto Rico reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.

### **Puerto Rico Youth Sexual Health Statistics**

#### *Teen Pregnancy, Birth, and Abortion*

- In 2005, Puerto Rico's teen birth rate was 60 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 40.5 births per 1,000.<sup>5</sup>
- 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.<sup>6</sup> Puerto Rico's teen birth rate also increased between 2005 and 2006, from 60 to 61.2 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19.<sup>7</sup>

#### *HIV and AIDS*

- In 2007, there were a total of 580 new cases of HIV infection diagnosed among all age groups in Puerto Rico.<sup>8</sup>
- Puerto Rico's AIDS rate is 21.5 cases per 100,000 population compared to the national rate of 12.5 cases per 100,000.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, there were a total of 22 new AIDS cases reported in Puerto Rico.<sup>10</sup>
- In 2007, there were a total of seven AIDS cases reported among young people ages 13–19 in Puerto Rico.<sup>11</sup>

#### *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*

- In 2008, there were a total of 2,000 cases of Chlamydia reported among young people ages 15–19 in Puerto Rico.<sup>12</sup>
- In Puerto Rico, there were a total of 49 cases of gonorrhea reported among young people ages 15–19 in 2008.<sup>13</sup>
- In 2008, there were a total of 15 cases of syphilis reported among young people ages 15–19 in Puerto Rico.<sup>14</sup>

### **Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Education**

*SIECUS is not aware of any examples of model programs, policies, or best practices being implemented in Puerto Rico 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 more comprehensive approaches to sex education being implemented in Puerto Rico public schools for inclusion in future publications of the SIECUS State Profiles. Please visit SIECUS' "Contact Us" webpage at [www.siecus.org](http://www.siecus.org) to share information. Select "state policy" as the subject heading.*

### **Federal Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs**

The Department of Health and community-based organizations in Puerto Rico received approximately \$2,501,215 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2009.<sup>15</sup>

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

- Puerto Rico received approximately \$1,902,906 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2009.<sup>16</sup> 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 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.
- The Department of Health uses a portion of the federal funds to support a media campaign, "Put it Into Practice," which focuses on strengthening communication between parents and youth about waiting for sex until marriage. The campaign is run by the Puerto Rico Abstinence Education Program (PRAEP), which is a collaboration between the departments of health and education. PRAEP also provides abstinence-only-until-marriage classes to youth enrolled in public and private schools, universities, community programs, and church youth groups called "Atrévete esperar" (Dare to Wait), and sponsors after school programs.

#### *Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) Funding*

- There is one CBAE grantee in Puerto Rico, Vanguardia por la Niñez, Inc., which received \$598,309 in CBAE funding for Fiscal Year 2009.

#### *Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Funding*

- There are no AFLA grantees in Puerto Rico.

### **Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Curricula Used by Grantees**

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

- *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](http://www.communityactionkit.org).*

**Federal Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2009<sup>17</sup>**

<b>Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee</b>	<b>Title V</b>	<b>CBAE (Length of Grant)</b>	<b>AFLA (Length of Grant)</b>
Puerto Rico Department of Health <a href="http://www.salud.gov.pr">www.salud.gov.pr</a>	\$1,902,906  (federal grant)		
Vanguardia por la Niñez, Inc. <a href="http://www.vanguardiapr.com">www.vanguardiapr.com</a>		\$598,309  (2006–2011)	

**Adolescent Health Contact<sup>18</sup>**

Carmen Barbosa  
 Puerto Rico Department of Health  
 Maternal, Infant, and Adolescent Division  
 P.O. Box 70184  
 San Juan, PR 00936  
 Phone: (787) 274-5634

**Puerto Rico Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

Asociación Puertorriqueña Pro-Bienestar de la Familia  
 Urbanización El Vedado  
 Calle Padre Las Casas No: 117,  
 Hato Rey, PR 00919  
 Phone: (787) 765 7373  
[www.profamiliapr.org](http://www.profamiliapr.org)

ACLU of Puerto Rico National Chapter  
 Union Plaza Building, Suite 205  
 416 Avenida Ponce de Leon  
 San Juan, PR 00918  
 Phone: (787) 753-8493  
[www.aclu-pr.org](http://www.aclu-pr.org)

**Puerto Rico Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

Asociación Pro Derechos de la Familia (APRODEFA)  
 P.O. Box 916  
 Guaynabo, PR 00970  
 Phone: (787) 272-5404  
[www.aprodefa.com](http://www.aprodefa.com)

Centro Guadalupe Vida y Familia  
 Calle 58 Sureste, No. 1289  
 Urbanización La Riviera  
 San Juan, PR 00921  
 Phone: (787) 504-6942

## Newspapers in Puerto Rico<sup>19</sup>

*Primera Hora*

Newsroom

P.O. Box 2009

Cataño, PR 00963

Phone: (787) 641-5450

[www.primerahora.com](http://www.primerahora.com)

*El Vocero de Puerto Rico*

Newsroom

P.O. Box 9067515

San Juan, PR 00906

Phone: (787) 725-4700

[www.vocero.com](http://www.vocero.com)

<sup>1</sup> Puerto Rico Act 70; Senate Bill 475.

<sup>2</sup> Puerto Rico Act 68; Senate Bill 674; House Bill 847.

<sup>3</sup> Puerto Rico Act 146 (2000).

<sup>4</sup> 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 19 October 2008, <<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>>. Note: Puerto Rico did not participate in the 2007 or 2009 YRBS.

<sup>5</sup> 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](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr57/nvsr57_07.pdf)>, Table B.

<sup>6</sup> Martin, et. al., “Births: Final Data for 2006.”

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., Table B.

<sup>8</sup> “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.

<sup>9</sup> 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/comparabletable.jsp?ind=513&cat=11&sub=120&yr=62&typ=1&sort=a>>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Table 16.

<sup>11</sup> 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>>.

<sup>12</sup> “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.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> This refers to the federal government’s fiscal year, which begins on October 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on September 30<sup>th</sup>. 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.

<sup>16</sup> SIECUS estimated this amount based on the amount of total funding Puerto Rico was allocated in previous fiscal years. Despite repeated attempts to contact the Department of Health, representatives in the department refused to provide SIECUS with the exact amount of funding received by the state.

<sup>17</sup> 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.

<sup>18</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>19</sup> 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.

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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](#).