



VERMONT

Vermont received \$69,885 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2005.¹

Vermont Sexuality Education Law and Policy

The Vermont Education Code includes sexuality education as part of its comprehensive health program. This program must be taught in elementary and secondary schools. The comprehensive health program has 10 parts, four of which are related to sexuality:

- Body structure and function, including the physical, psychosocial and psychological basis of human development, sexuality and reproduction;
- Disease, such as HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), as well as other communicable diseases, and the prevention of disease;
- Family health and mental health, including instruction which promotes the development of responsible personal behavior involving decision-making about sexual activity including abstinence; skills which strengthen existing family ties involving communication, cooperation, and interaction between parents and students; and instruction to aid in the establishment of strong family life in the future, thereby contributing to the enrichment of the community; and
- Human growth and development, including understanding the physical, emotional, and social elements of individual development and interpersonal relationships including instruction in parenting methods and styles. This shall include information regarding the possible outcomes of premature sexual activity, contraceptives, adolescent pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, and abortion.

Vermont's *Sample Comprehensive HIV Policy for Schools: Pre-K-12*, developed by the Department of Education, includes suggestions for HIV/AIDS-prevention education. Local school districts may establish a "comprehensive health education community advisory council" to assist the school board in developing and deciding upon health curricula. In addition, Vermont statute requires that "the commissioner [of education] with the approval of the state board shall establish an advisory council on comprehensive health education...The council shall assist the department of education in planning a program of comprehensive health education in the public schools."

Parents or guardians may remove their children from a sexuality education class if the content is in conflict with their religious beliefs. This is referred to as an "opt-out" policy.

See Vermont Statute, Title 16, Part 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter 7, Sections 131 through 135 and the *Sample Comprehensive HIV Policy for Schools: Pre-K-12*.

Recent Legislation

SIECUS is not aware of any proposed legislation regarding sexuality education in Vermont.

Events of Note

SIECUS is not aware of any recent events related to sexuality education in Vermont.

Vermont's Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- In 2005, 3% of female high school students and 7% of male high school students in Vermont 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, 10% of female high school students and 12% of male high school students in Vermont 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, 32% of female high school students and 30% of male high school students in Vermont 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, 60% of females and 69% of males in Vermont 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, 39% of females and 28% of males in Vermont 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, 19% of females and 28% of males in Vermont reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2000, Vermont's abortion rate was 14 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.³
- In 2002, Vermont's birth rate was 24 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.⁴

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Vermont received \$69,885 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding 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. Vermont matches the federal funding with \$52,698 in state funds. The Vermont Department of Health oversees the funding along with an advisory committee that includes staff from Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, staff from Senator Jim Jeffords’ (I) and Senator Patrick Leahy’s (D) offices, and representatives from various schools throughout the state.

Vermont uses its funding for a statewide media campaign titled *There For Me*, which targets youth ages 10–14 and their parents. The goal of the campaign is to promote parent/child communication around risk-taking behaviors such as early sexual behavior and alcohol, specifically how drug and alcohol use increases vulnerability to sexual advances. This campaign emphasizes point G of the federal government’s 8-point definition of “abstinence education,” which states that the program must, “teach young people how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances.” This campaign also works with physicians who see adolescent patients to teach them how to talk with adolescents and the families of adolescents about the link between alcohol use and sexual activity.

Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE)⁵ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There are no CBAE or AFLA grantees in Vermont.

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 CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Vermont Department of Health www.healthyvermonters.info	\$69,885 federal \$52,698 state	Title V

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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Vermont Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

American Civil Liberties Union
137 Elm St.
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone: (802) 223-6304
<http://members.aol.com/acluvt/home.html>

Mountain Pride Media
PO Box 1122
Burlington, VT 05402
Phone: (802) 861-6486
www.mountainpridemedia.org

NARAL Pro-Choice Vermont
PO Box 1023
Burlington, VT 05402
Phone: (802) 658-0710
www.prochoicevt.org

Outright Vermont
PO Box 5235
Burlington, VT 05402
Phone: (800) GLB-CHAT
www.outrightvt.org

Planned Parenthood of Northern New
England
183 Talcott Rd., Suite 101
Williston, VT 05495
Phone: (800) 287-8188
www.ppnne.org

Vermont Catholics for Free Conscience
PO Box 135
Middlebury, VT 05753
Phone: (802) 388-4150

Vermont Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Center for American Cultural Renewal
PO Box 1566
Rutland, VT 05701
Phone: (802) 775-6247
www.cfacr.org/about.htm

Vermont Right to Life Committee, Inc.
PO Box 1079
Montpelier, VT 05601
Phone: (802) 229-4885
www.vrlc.net

Newspapers in Vermont

Bennington Banner
Stephanie Ryan
Health & Medicine Editor
425 Main St.
Bennington, VT 05201
Phone: (802) 447-7567

Brattleboro Reformer
Kevin Moran
Medical/Health Editor
Black Mountain Rd.
Brattleboro, VT 53011
Phone: (802) 254-2311

The Burlington Free Press
Adam Silverman
Community News Reporter
191 College St.
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: (802) 660-1854

The Burlington Free Press
Molly Walsh
Education Reporter
191 College St.
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: (802) 660-1874

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The Caledonian-Record
Gail Pison-Montany
Medical/Health Editor
190 Federal St.
Saint Johnsbury, VT 05819
Phone: (802) 748-8121

Newport Daily Express
Faith Sargent
Community News Reporter
178 Hill St.
Newport, VT 05855
Phone: (802) 334-6568

St. Albans Messenger
Assignment Editor
281 N. Main St.
Saint Albans, VT 05478
Phone: (802) 524-9771

The Vermont Standard
Education Editor
Rt. 4 W
Woodstock, VT 5091
Phone: (802) 457-1313

*Essex Reporter and Colchester Sun
Newspapers*
Education Editor
462 Hegeman Ave.
Colchester, VT 05446
Phone: (802) 878-5282

Rutland Herald
Nancy Linkous
Health & Medicine Editor
27 Wales St.
Rutland, VT 05701
Phone: (802) 747-6133

The Times Argus
Community News Reporter
540 N. Main St.
Barre, VT 05641
Phone: (802) 479-0191

The Vermont Times
Education Editor
145 Pine Haven Shores Rd.
Shelburne, VT 05482
Phone: (802) 985-2400

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 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>>.

³ *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>.

⁴ *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>>.

⁵ 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).