



WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia received \$921,135 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2004.¹

West Virginia Sexuality Education Law

West Virginia law does not require sexuality education, but does require HIV/AIDS-prevention education in sixth through twelfth grade. According to a West Virginia legislative rule, “the goal of this policy is to assist in the protection of students by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to avoid behaviors that will put them at the risk of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).”

Each county board must integrate HIV-prevention education into health courses and may also include it in science, development, and social studies courses.

Parents or guardians may remove their children from any part of this instruction by written notification to the principal. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Legislative Rule of the West Virginia Board of Education 126-50A and 126-50B (West Virginia Board of Education Policies 2422.4 and 2422.45).

Recent Legislation

SIECUS is not aware of any recent legislation related to sexuality education in West Virginia.

Events of Note

West Virginia Attorney General’s Office Cuts Anti-Bullying Program
January 2003

An anti-bullying program called the *Civil Rights Team Project*, which was run by the West Virginia Attorney General’s office in 20 schools, came under fire in October 2002. Parents, community members, and religious groups voiced opposition to the program because it discussed homosexuality. The parents took their complaints about the program to the state board of education which halted the program until a board committee could review it.

Due to the criticism, the West Virginia Attorney General’s office dropped the anti-bullying program in January 2003. The Managing Deputy Attorney General explained, “a program that has aroused so much controversy and objection is no longer useful. If it’s going to be successful, it needs the support of parents and the community.”²

*Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grant Cancelled**March 2002; Upshur, WV*

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources cancelled an “Abstinence Only Education” grant agreement with the Stockert Youth Center, citing the organization’s failure to comply with program requirements. Compliance problems included “failure to implement evaluation protocols, failure to submit evaluation data, failure to attend required meetings, and failure to meet program goals and objectives.” It was also determined that 95 % of the funding was used for salary and benefits.

The director of the Upshur Youth Council at the Stockert Youth Center has “formulated a plan to restructure” the program. A county administrator said, however, that “it would appear that the abstinence grant is gone.”³

West Virginia’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁴

- In 2003, 55% of female high school students and 49% of male high school students in West Virginia reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 45% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 4% of female high school students and 10% of male high school students in West Virginia 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 2003, 17% of female high school students and 16% of male high school students in West Virginia reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 11% of female high school students and 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 44% of female high school students and 34% of male high school students in West Virginia reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to the survey) compared to 35% of females and 34% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 21% of females and 30% of males in West Virginia reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 30% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 58% of females and 74% of males in West Virginia reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 57% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 28% of females and 21% of males in West Virginia reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 13% of males nationwide.

- In 2003, 5% of female high school students and 4% of male high school students in West Virginia reported ever having been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant compared to 5% of female high school students and 4% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 89% of high school students in West Virginia reported having been taught about HIV/AIDS in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, West Virginia's abortion rate was 10 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁵
- In 2002, West Virginia's birth rate was 45 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.⁶

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

West Virginia received \$487,536 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2004. 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. In West Virginia, the state match is provided by sub-grantees. West Virginia Office of Maternal and Child Health oversees this funding.

The program focuses on youth ages 10-14 and their parents, though some sub-grantees serve older youth. There are eight sub-grantees, each of which receives \$46,000 in funding. Sub-grantees run a wide range of projects, including media campaigns; elementary, middle and high school programs; and provide peer mentoring programs.

The West Virginia Abstinence Education Project uses some of its funding to support an interactive website (<http://www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/icah/Abstinence/>) with a frequently asked questions section. In response to the question "Are condoms an effective method of birth control?" the West Virginia Abstinence Education Project answers:

Condoms greatly reduce the risk of pregnancy, by about 90%, if they are used correctly, if they are used every time you have sex or put the penis near the vagina, if they don't break or leak (doesn't happen often, but it happens), if they don't slip off, and if the contents are not spilled near the vagina after sex.

We couldn't resist pointing out two things here:

1. It sounds like a lot has to go just perfect for this to protect you.
2. Condoms don't protect you from the some of the bad emotional feelings you may get when you have sex.⁷

The frequently asked question page also covers the topic of abstinence and oral sex. It categorizes oral sex, anal sex, and mutual masturbation as sex and warns that even mutual masturbation can put one in danger of catching STDs.⁸

Special Projects of Regional and National Significance—Community Based Abstinence Education (SPRANS—CBAE)⁹ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There is one SPRANS—CBAE grantee in West Virginia: Community Actions of South Eastern West Virginia. There are no AFLA grantees in West Virginia.

Community Actions of South Eastern West Virginia uses the *FACTS* curricula in eighth grade classrooms for two West Virginia counties. SIECUS reviewed the *FACTS* curricula and found that in order to convince students to remain abstinent until marriage, they provide incomplete and inaccurate medical information; present opinions and beliefs as universal truths; and portray a biased view of gender, marriage, family structure, sexual orientation, and pregnancy options. For example, *FACTS* includes the following as the negative consequences of premarital sex: “pregnancy, financial aspect of fatherhood, abortion, HIV/AIDS, STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases), guilt, rejection, loss of reputation, inability to bond in the future, challenge to not compare future sexual partners, alienation from friends and family, poverty and the inability to complete school.”¹⁰ *FACTS* also includes the following as an emotional consequence of sex: “you know people talk about you behind your back because you’ve had sex with so many people. It so empty too (sic). Finally you get sick of it all and attempt suicide.”¹¹

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2004

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources West Virginia Abstinence Education Project www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/icah/Abstinence/	\$487,536	Title V
Catholic Community Services / Gabriel Project (The Northern Panhandle Coalition for Abstinence Education)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Ritchie County Board of Education	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Rainelle Medical Center (School Improvement Council at Meadow Bridge High School)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Wayne County Board of Education (Wayne County Abstinence Education Coalition)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
Windy Mountain Learning Center (Safe and Structured Places Committee)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Youth Health Service (Community of Caring)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Community Actions of South Eastern West Virginia 2001-2004 www.casewv.org	\$433,599	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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West Virginia Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of West Virginia
 PO Box 3952
 Charleston, WV 25399
 Phone: (304) 345-9246
www.aclu-wv.org

Inside and OUT!
 PO Box 5835
 Huntington, WV 25703
www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/6273/Lr.htm

Rainbow Pride of West Virginia Inc.
 PO Box 2624
 Charleston, WV 25329
 Phone: (304) 345-9938
www.pridewv.com

West Virginia Lesbian and Gay Coalition (WVLGC)
 PO Box 11033
 Charleston, WV 25339
 Phone: (304) 343-7305
<http://members.aol.com/wvlgc>

West Virginia Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

West Virginia Family Foundation
PO Box 3421
Charleston, WV 25334
Phone: (304) 965-6700
www.wvfamily.org

West Virginians For Life, Inc.
427 Spruce St.
Morgantown, WV 26505
Phone: (304) 291-5433
www.wvforLife.org

Newspapers in West Virginia

Bluefield Daily Telegraph
Kathy Kish
Medical/Health Writer
928 Bluefield Ave.
Bluefield, WV 24701
Phone: (304) 327-2800

Charleston Daily Mail
Monica Orosz
Medical/Health Editor
1001 Virginia St. E.
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: (304) 348-4874

The Charleston Gazette
Doug Imbrogno
Medical/Health Editor
1001 Virginia St. East
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: (304) 348-1254

The Dominion Post
Pam Queen
Medical/Health Editor
1251 Earl L. Core Rd.
Morgantown, WV 26505
Phone: (304) 291-9441

Exponent Telegram
Pam Kendall
Medical/Health Editor
324 Hewes Ave.
Clarksburg, WV 26301
Phone: (304) 626-1449

The Herald-Dispatch
Andrea Copley Smith
Medical/Health Editor
946 5th Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
Phone: (304) 526-2792

The Intelligencer
Betsy Bethel
Medical/Health Staff Editor
1500 Main St.
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: (304) 233-0100

News and Sentinel
Kristofer McKenna
Medical/Health Editor
519 Juliana St.
Parkersburg, WV 26101
Phone: (304) 485-1891

The Register-Herald
Bev Davis
Medical/Health Editor
801 N. Kanawha St.
Beckley, WV 25801
Phone: (304) 255-4474

Wheeling News-Register
Betsy Bethel-McFarland
Medical/Health Editor
1500 Main St.
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: (304) 233-0100

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 2004 begins on October 1, 2003 and ends on September 30, 2004.

² “Attorney General Scraps Civil Rights Team Project,” *Associated Press*, (Charleston, WV), 23 January 2003.

³ C.J. Walton, “County: Abstinence Grant Being Canceled at Youth Center,” *The Inter-Mountain*, 25 February 2002.

⁴ Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Jo Anne Grunbaum, et. al., “Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2003,” *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 53.SS-2 (21 May 2004): 1-95, accessed 28 January 2005, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>>.

⁵ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, February, 2004), accessed 28 January 2005, <www.guttmacher.org>.

⁶ *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>>.

⁷ *Frequently Asked Questions About Sex*, West Virginia Abstinence Education Project, accessed 9 January 2005, <<http://www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/icah/Abstinence/FAQ.htm>>.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ In FY 2004 SPRANS–CBAE was administered within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. In FY 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).

¹⁰ Rose Fuller et al., *FACTS-Middle School Teacher’s Edition* (Portland, OR: Northwest Family Services, 2000), 10.

¹¹ Rose Fuller, *FACTS-Middle School Teacher’s Edition Appendix* (Portland, OR: Northwest Family Services, 2000), 98.