



ALABAMA

The Department of Public Health and community-based organizations in Alabama received \$3,994,551 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2007.¹

Alabama Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Alabama Code sets minimum requirements for what must be taught in sexuality education classes. Among other things, classes must teach that:

- abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only completely effective protection against unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) when transmitted sexually; and
- abstinence from sexual intercourse outside of lawful marriage is the expected social standard for unmarried school-age persons.

The Code also states that:

- course materials and instruction that relate to sexual education or sexually transmitted diseases should be age-appropriate;
- course materials and instruction that relate to sexual education or sexually transmitted diseases should emphasize the importance of self-control and ethical conduct pertaining to sexual behavior;
- statistics used must be based on the latest medical information that indicate the degree of reliability and unreliability of various forms of contraception, while also emphasizing the increase in protection against pregnancy and protection against sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS infection, which is afforded by the use of various contraceptive measures; and
- classes must emphasize, in a factual manner and from a public health perspective, that homosexuality is not a lifestyle acceptable to the general public and that homosexual conduct is a criminal offense under the laws of the state.²

In Alabama, curriculum content is developed locally; however, Alabama's *Course of Study: Health Education* provides the foundation for the minimum content requirements for topics such as HIV, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and pregnancy prevention. In addition, in July 1987, the Alabama State Board of Education passed the *Resolution to Provide Information to Students to Prevent the Spread of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Disease in the Public Schools of Alabama*. This resolution specifies that students in grades five–12 must receive instruction about AIDS through a health education program.

Parents or guardians may remove their children from sexuality education and/or STD/HIV education classes. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Alabama State Code Section 16-40A-2, the *Alabama Course of Study: Health Education*, and the *Resolution to Provide Information to Students to Prevent the Spread of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome Disease in the Public Schools of Alabama*.

Recent Legislation

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

Events of Note

Elementary School Anatomy Lessons Raise Concern with Parents

February 2007; Tuscaloosa, AL

Parents of students in fourth and fifth grade at Tuscaloosa city schools balked when they discovered what their children were learning. The children's health class curriculum covered "growth and human development," reproduction, anatomy, and HIV/AIDS. Parents were specifically concerned about slides depicting female and male genitals which were included in a lesson on puberty and anatomy.³

School officials responded to parent and teacher concerns and agreed to rework the lesson plans. They started by forming a review committee composed of the curriculum team, elementary principals, and teachers. One board of education member explained that the state-approved model of study would be adapted to suit county schools.⁴ However, there was no mention of fate of the slides that raised the original qualms.

Parents will receive a copy of the study material two weeks before the class, which officials hope will stimulate conversations with their children about the subject. Parents have the option of withdrawing their children from the class if they find the materials offensive.

Alabama's Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁵

- In 2005, 47% of female high school students and 55% of male high school students in Alabama reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 5% of female high school students and 13% of male high school students in Alabama 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 21% of male high school students in Alabama 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, 38% of female high school students and 38% of male high school students in Alabama 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 65% of males in Alabama 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, 17% of females and 18% of males in Alabama 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, 15% of females and 30% of males in Alabama 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 Alabama reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

The Alabama Department of Public Health received \$953,172 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds 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. Alabama does not use state funds for the match; instead, sub-grantees provide the match. In Fiscal Year 2007, sub-grantees matched the funds through in-kind services totaling \$966,015, which exceeded the required amount. These funds are controlled by Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) through the Alabama Abstinence-Until-Marriage Education Program (AAEP).

The AAEP distributes Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding to eight sub-grantees: the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Circle of Care Center for Families, Crittenton Youth Services, Dale County Abstinence Advocacy Council, Huntsville City Schools, Lee County Youth Development Center, Sex and Family Education (S.A.f.E.), Inc., and Troy Regional Medical Center/AIM Project doing business as Wright & Associates. In addition, Auburn University was awarded a \$107,862 Title V sub-grant to conduct an evaluation.

AAEP uses the slogan, “Doin’ It Doesn’t Get It! Save Sex for Marriage!” in its abstinence-only-until-marriage program.⁶ The AAEP also runs a statewide media campaign that uses the same slogan. The campaign consists of a website with information, resources, and upcoming events; printed material; news releases; radio and television announcements; and billboards.

The AAEP website contains misinformation and messages of fear and shame. For example, the website tells parents that a sexually transmitted disease (STD) is an infection that can be transferred through sexual activity and goes on to define sexual activity as “any activity that involves intentional contact for the purpose of sexual arousal. Sexual activity, then, includes sexual intercourse, oral sex, anal sex, mutual masturbation, & other purposeful sexual touching.” In truth, some sexual activities, such as mutual masturbation or massage, which can be categorized as “purposeful sexual touching,” do not pose any risk of transmitting STDs.

An STD chart on AAEP’s website lists several STDs. Under the column marked “Condom Effectiveness,” the AAEP tells young people that there is “no clinical proof of effectiveness” against the transmission of gonorrhea, Chlamydia, trichomoniasis, and human papillomavirus (HPV).⁷ In fact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports, “Latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, can reduce the risk of transmission of gonorrhea, Chlamydia, and trichomoniasis.”¹⁸ In addition, condoms can protect against HPV. According to a University of Washington study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, consistent condom use can cut a woman’s risk of infection by 70% and protect her from developing precancerous cervical changes.⁹

Title V sub-grantees use a variety of curricula in their programs including *Abstinence the Better Choice*, *ASPIRE: Live your life. Be free, Baby Think It Over*, *Choosing the Best LIFE*, *Choosing the Best PATH*, *Everyone Is Not*

Doing It, Fetal Development: A Nine Month Journey, Love U2: Increasing Your Relationship Smarts, Reasonable Reasons to Wait, and Why kNOw. Sub-grantees also use Mike Long’s video, *Everyone Is Not Doing It*.

Crittenton Youth Services operates both middle and high school programs in the Mobile, Alabama school district. The agency trains teachers and monitors their progress in delivering abstinence-only-until-marriage programming, and provides abstinence-only programming to students. In high school, Crittenton Youth Services uses *ASPIRE: Live your life. Be free*. SIECUS reviewed *Aspire* and found that it is based on one set of values and opinions—that marriage should be everyone’s ultimate goal and that sex outside of marriage is wrong—which it tries to pass off as universally held truths. In an effort to convince students that these opinions are facts, the curriculum provides incomplete and biased information, promotes fear and shame, and undermines young people’s confidence in their own decision-making abilities. For example, students are asked which life decision—college, career, or marriage—will have the most impact on their life. The answer is marriage because “College is for a few years, and you may have a number of careers. But marriage is for life.”¹⁰

In addition to using *Aspire*, Crittenton Youth Services uses *The Choice Game* in high school classrooms. *The Choice Game* is an interactive CD/DVD software program, created by Several Sources, that teaches “healthy choices” about abstinence, drugs, alcohol, and teen pressures. Several Sources has produced two versions of this resource: an “urban version” and a “Midwestern version.”¹¹ Both versions include a section on teen pregnancy. On the website, the urban version follows a young pregnant woman of color as she attempts to decide if she will marry, put the child up for adoption, or raise the child alone. Abortion is not discussed as an option. The young woman is shown as having no support until the home for pregnant teens (which Several Sources also runs) steps in—her grandmother cannot help her raise the child because “you know that landlord won’t have no babies,” her boyfriend leaves to join the Navy, and her boyfriend’s mother doubts if her son is the father. The Midwest version does not deal with unintended pregnancies, instead stating that this “curriculum has as its exclusive purpose to teach abstinence and is consistent with the abstinence-until-marriage message.”¹² While it is often appropriate to create culturally competent curricula geared to the specific population or community in which the program will be used, the double standard implied by these two versions is disturbing. Several Sources seems to suggest that while young people in the Midwest have the ability to decide to save sex for marriage thereby avoiding unintended pregnancies, their “urban” counterparts do not and will be left to deal with the consequences.

The Sex and Family Education (S.A.f.E.), Inc. Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage sub-grantee operates throughout the state of Alabama. Its mission reads, “To make abstinence a desirable, achievable and sustainable lifestyle for all unmarried people while promoting sexual integrity within marriage.”¹³ One of the programs available from S.A.f.E., Inc. is *Sex Cents*. This fifty-minute session “focuses on the personal and social economic gains of a successful marriage and the personal and social economic costs of marriage failure.”¹⁴

Why kNOw is another abstinence-only-until-marriage curriculum used by sub-grantees in Alabama, SIECUS reviewed this curriculum and found that the program offers limited information about important topics in human sexuality such as puberty, anatomy, and human reproduction, and no information about sexual orientation and gender identity. The information that is included is outdated, inaccurate, and misleading. In addition, *Why kNOw* relies on negative messages, distorts information, and presents biased views on gender, marriage, family structure, sexual orientation, and pregnancy options. For example, the curriculum tells students that the tradition of lifting the veil shows that “the groom [is] the only man allowed to uncover the bride,” and demonstrates “her respect for him by illustrating that she [has] not allowed any other man to lay claim to her.”¹⁵

Two other sub-grantees—the Circle of Care Center for Families¹⁶ and the Troy Regional Medical Center/ Abstinence In Motion Project¹⁷ — use the *Choosing the Best* curricula. (See the CBAE and AFLA section for more information on *Choosing the Best LIFE* and *Choosing the Best PATH*.)

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

There are five CBAE grantees in Alabama: Alabama State University; Charles Henderson Memorial Association, Crittenton Youth Services, New Hope Baptist Church, and Teens Empowerment Awareness with ResolutionS (TEARS), Inc. There is one AFLA grantee in Alabama: Alabama State University.

Alabama State University uses its grant to conduct the “L.I.F.E Savers” abstinence-only-until-marriage program. The mission of this program is to “empower youth to make an informed decision to choose abstinence as a means to preserve their health through interactive education.”¹⁸

Charles Henderson Memorial Association conducts the “AIM (Abstinence in Motion)” and “Mentoring Matters” abstinence-only-until-marriage programs. The Mentoring Matters program “is designed to educate teens about the advantages of pursuing abstinence until marriage.”¹⁹ In Mentoring Matters, a group of high school students in grades 10–12 is trained to serve as teen mentors for students in grades seven and eight. High school mentors must fall into one of three categories:

- students who never engaged in any high risk behaviors
- students who have engaged in high risk behaviors but have decided to make a decision to live an abstinent lifestyle
- students who have engaged in high risk behaviors and, as a result, are dealing with the consequences of those behaviors but have made a conscious decision to encourage others not to make the same mistake.²⁰

Crittenton Youth Services, which is also a Title V grantee, is an affiliate of the Abstinence Clearinghouse, an organization designed to “promote the appreciation for and practice of sexual abstinence (purity) until marriage through the distribution of age appropriate, factual, and medically-referenced materials.”²¹

New Hope Baptist Church conducts the “Birmingham Abstinence Education Program,” an abstinence-only-until-marriage program that reaches middle school and high school students in Birmingham city schools.²² Facilitators from the church provide two week programs to students using the *Choosing the Best* curricula.²³ 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.”²⁴

Teens Empowerment Awareness with ResolutionS (TEARS), Inc. offers a number of services, including counseling, school-based programs, martial arts, dance, and Positive Peers, a “support group for youth choosing abstinence and positive choices.”²⁵ TEARS created the abstinence program “Abstinence Education To Help Instill Character (A-ETHICS),” which uses two curricula: *The Choice Game* and *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted) Training*.²⁶ 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.”²⁷ (See the Title V section for information on the *Choice Game*.)

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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)
Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) www.adph.org/ABSTINENCE	\$953,172 federal \$966,015 state	Title V
Alabama Cooperative Extension System www.aces.edu	\$103,752	Title V sub-grantee
Auburn University	\$107,862	Title V sub-grantee
Circle of Care Center for Families	\$54,036	Title V sub-grantee
Crittenton Youth Services DUAL Grantee 2007–2011	\$40,036 \$525,763	Title V sub-grantee CBAE
Dale County Abstinence Advocacy Council	\$66,212	Title V sub-grantee
Huntsville City Schools www.hsv.k12.al.us	\$40,000	Title V sub-grantee
Lee County Youth Development Center www.lcydc.org	\$82,650	Title V sub-grantee
Sex and Family Education (S.A.f.E.), Inc. www.sexandfamilyeducation.org	\$165,298	Title V sub-grantee

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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)
Troy Regional Medical Center/AIM Project d.b.a. Wright & Associates	\$98,096	Title V sub-grantee
Alabama State University 2004–2007 DUAL GRANTEE 2002–2007 www.alasu.edu	\$740,211 \$225,000	CBAE AFLA
Charles Henderson Memorial Association (d.b.a. Charles Henderson) 2006–2011	\$600,000	CBAE
New Hope Baptist Church 2006–2011 www.newhope2locations.com	\$600,000	CBAE
Teens Empowerment Awareness with ResolutionS (TEARS), Inc. 2005–2008 www.tearsinc.org	\$350,405	CBAE

Adolescent Health Contact²⁸

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Alabama Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of Alabama
207 Montgomery St., Suite 825
Montgomery, AL 36101
Phone: (334) 265-2754
www.aclualabama.org

AIDS Action Coalition of North Alabama
600 St. Clair Ave., Bldg 6, Suite 14
Huntsville, AL 35801
Phone: (256) 536-4700
www.aidsactioncoalition.org

AIDS Alabama
P.O. Box 55703
3521 7th Ave.
S. Birmingham, AL 35222
Phone: (205) 324-9822
www.aidsalabama.org

Planned Parenthood of Alabama
1211 27th Pl. S
Birmingham, AL 35205
Phone: (205) 322-2121
www.ppalabama.org

Alabama Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Alabama Citizens for Life
P.O. Box 184
Montgomery, AL 36101
Phone: (334) 666-6805
www.al4life.com

Alabama Policy Institute
402 Office Park Dr., Suite 300
Birmingham, AL 35223
Phone: (205) 870-9900
www.alabamapolicy.org

The Alabama Pro-Life Coalition
Education Fund
1401 Doug Baker Blvd., Suite 107
Box 222
Birmingham, AL 35242
Phone: (205) 335-1194
www.chooselifealabama.org

National Physicians Center for Family
Resources
P.O. Box 59692
Birmingham, AL 35259
Phone: (205) 870-0234
www.physicianscenter.org

Newspapers in Alabama²⁹

Birmingham News
Newsroom
P.O. Box 2553
Birmingham, AL 35202
Phone: (205) 325-2444
www.bhamnews.com

Dothan Eagle
Newsroom
227 N. Oates St.
Dothan, AL 36303
Phone: (334) 792-3141
www.dothaneagle.com

Decatur Daily
Newsroom
201 1st Ave. SE
Decatur, AL 35601
Phone: (256) 340-2433
www.decaturdaily.com

Huntsville Times
Newsroom
P.O. Box 1487
Huntsville, AL 35807
Phone: (256) 532-2620
www.htimes.com

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Gadsden Times
Newsroom
401 Locust St.
Gadsden, AL 35901
Phone: (256) 549-2000
www.gadsdentimes.com

Montgomery Advertiser
Newsroom
425 Molton St.
Montgomery, AL 36104
Phone: (334) 551-0308
www.montgomeryadvertiser.com

Mobile Register
Newsroom
401 N. Water St.
Mobile, AL 36602
Phone: (251) 219-5454
www.mobilerregister.com

Tuscaloosa News
Newsroom
315 28th Ave.
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
Phone: (205) 722-0207
www.tuscaloosanews.com

Times Daily
Newsroom
219 W. Tennessee St.
Florence, AL 35630
Phone: (256) 740-5743
www.timesdaily.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 In 2003, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which declared state laws criminalizing homosexual behavior to be unconstitutional.

³ Antwanette Jones, "City Schools Rethink Sex Education Curriculum," *Dateline Alabama*, 16 February 2007, accessed 20 February 2007, <www.tuscaloosanews.com/article/20070216/NEWS/702160342/1007/dateline&cachetime=3&template=dateline>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ 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>>. Note: Alabama did not participate in the 2007 YRBS.

⁶ "Abstinence-Until-Marriage Education," Alabama Abstinence Education Program, accessed 22 February 2008, <<http://www.adph.org/abstinence/Default.asp?id=1239>>.

⁷ "Important Information for Parents, Teens, and Adult Role Models on Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Condom Effectiveness," The Alabama Department of Public Health, accessed 3 May 2008, <<http://www.adph.org/ABSTINENCE/Default.asp?TemplateNbr=0&DeptID=112&TemplateId=562>>.

⁸ "Fact Sheet for Public Health Personnel: Male Latex Condoms and Sexually Transmitted Diseases," Centers for Disease Control, Department of Health and Human Services, (January 2003), accessed 3 May 2008, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchstp/od/condoms.pdf>>.

⁹ Rachel Winer, Ph.D., "Condom Use and the Risk of Genital Human Papillomavirus Infection in Young Women," *New England Journal of Medicine* 354.25 (2006): 2645-2654.

¹⁰ Scott Phelps, *Aspire. Live your life. Be Free.* (Arlington, IL: Abstinence & Marriage Resources, 2006). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *Aspire* at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.html>.

¹¹ "The Choice Game," Several Sources Foundation, (2005-2007), accessed 5 March 2008, <<http://www.thechoicegame.com/>>.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "Mission Statement," Sex and Family Education (S.A.F.E.), Inc., (2007), accessed 11 March 2008, <<http://www.sexandfamilyeducation.org/>>.

¹⁴ "More Curricula," Sex and Family Education (S.A.F.E.), Inc., (2007), accessed 11 March 2008, <<http://www.sexandfamilyeducation.org/>>.

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- ¹⁵ Kris Frainie, *Why kNOW Abstinence Education Program Teacher's Manual*, (Chattanooga, TN: Why kNow Abstinence Education Programs, A Division of AAA Women's Services, 2002). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *Why kNOW* at <<http://www.communityactionkit.org/reviews/WhyKnow.html>>.
- ¹⁶ Personal communication between Donna Sauvigne and Catherine Morrison, 11 March 2008.
- ¹⁷ Personal communication between Cora McMaster and Catherine Morrison, 11 March 2008.
- ¹⁸ "Abstinence Education," Alabama State University College of Education, (2008), accessed 28 January 2008, <<http://www.alasu.edu/Education/default.aspx?id=138>>.
- ¹⁹ "Abstinence Education Programs: Approaches, Obstacles, and Innovative Practices: Charles Henderson Memorial Association AIM Project," Abstinence Education Grantees: 2007 Regional Trainings Resources, 2007, accessed 28 January 2008, <<http://abstinence.pal-tech.com/>>.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ "About Us," Abstinence Clearinghouse, accessed 28 January, <<http://www.abstinence.net/about/>>.
- ²² "Church Offers Abstinence Lessons to Public School Students," *The Associate Press*, 7 February 2007, accessed 28 January 2008, <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20070207/25665_Church_Offers_Abstinence_Lessons_to_Public_School_Students.htm>.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ 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>.
- ²⁵ "Programs Offered," Teens Empowerment Awareness with ResolutionS, accessed 28 January 2008, <<http://www.tearsinc.org/programoffered.html>>.
- ²⁶ "Building a Strong Foundation," Teens Empowerment Awareness with ResolutionS, accessed 28 January 2008, <<http://www.tearsinc.org/foundation.html>>.
- ²⁷ 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>.
- ²⁸ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.
- ²⁹ 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](#).