



### ALABAMA

#### Alabama Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Alabama state law does not require the teaching of sexuality education, however, a resolution adopted by the Board of Education in 1987 does require that students in grades five through 12 receive instruction about AIDS through a health education program. Should schools choose to offer additional sexuality education, the Code of Alabama sets minimum requirements for what must be taught, but specific content is developed locally. Among other things, the code requires sex education classes to tell students that:

- abstinence from sexual intercourse is the only completely effective protection against unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to this code, the *Alabama Course of Study: Health Education* provides the foundation for the minimum content requirements for topics such as HIV, STDs, and pregnancy prevention. Among the sexuality topics covered are “societal expectations of remaining abstinent until married,” the “physical, social, and emotional effects” of STDs, disease transmission, responsible decision-making, and refusal skills.<sup>3</sup>

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**

#### *Parents' Right to Know Act Introduced*

House Bill 550, introduced in February 2009, would have required school principals to notify parents that their child does not receive instruction on preventing STDs, HIV/AIDS, and pregnancy if that child participates in an abstinence-only-until-marriage program. The notice to parents would have stated that such programs do not provide medically accurate information on the risks, benefits, or proper use of methods approved by the Food and Drug Administration for reducing the risk of contracting or transmitting STDs, including HIV/AIDS, or pregnancy. HB 550 would have also required the parental notice to include that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, as well as students who currently are sexually active, do not receive any information regarding making healthy choices about sexuality. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Education Policy, where it died.

### **Alabama's Youth: Statistical Information of Note<sup>4</sup>**

- In 2009, 51% of female high school students and 62% of male high school students in Alabama reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 46% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2009, 4% of female high school students and 16% of male high school students in Alabama reported having had sexual intercourse before age 13 compared to 3% of female high school students and 8% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2009, 14% of female high school students and 26% of male high school students in Alabama reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 11% of female high school students and 16% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2009, 42% of female high school students and 41% 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 36% of female high school students and 33% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2009, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 55% of females and 63% of males in Alabama reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 54% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2009, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 25% of females and 17% of males in Alabama reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 23% of females and 17% of males nationwide.

- In 2009, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 15% of females and 28% of males in Alabama reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 17% of females and 26% of males nationwide.
- In 2009, 85% of high school students in Alabama reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 87% of high school students nationwide.

## **Alabama Youth Sexual Health Statistics**

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

- Alabama's teen pregnancy rate ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in the U.S., with a rate of 73 pregnancies per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 70 pregnancies per 1,000.<sup>5</sup> There were a total of 11,430 pregnancies among young women ages 15–19 reported in 2005, the most recent year for which data are available, in Alabama.<sup>6</sup>
- Alabama's teen birth rate ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. in 2005, with a rate of 49.7 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 40.5 births per 1,000.<sup>7</sup> There were a total of 7,771 live births among young women ages 15–19 reported in 2005 in Alabama.<sup>8</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>9</sup> In contrast, Alabama's teen birth rate increased 8% between 2005 and 2006, from 49.7 to 53.5 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19.<sup>10</sup>
- Alabama's teen abortion rate ranks 26<sup>th</sup> in the U.S., with a rate of 12 abortions per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 19 abortions per 1,000. In 2005, there were a total of 2,082 abortions reported among young women ages 15–19 in Alabama.<sup>11</sup>

### *HIV and AIDS*

- Alabama ranks 18<sup>th</sup> in cases of HIV infection diagnosed in the U.S. among all age groups. In 2007, there were a total of 447 new cases of HIV infection diagnosed in Alabama.<sup>12</sup>
- Alabama ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in cases of HIV/AIDS diagnosed among young people ages 13–19 out of the 34 states with confidential, name-based HIV infection reporting. In 2007, there were a total of 42 young people ages 13–19 diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Alabama.<sup>13</sup>
- Alabama's AIDS rate ranks 26<sup>th</sup> in the U.S., with a rate of 8.4 cases per 100,000 population compared to the national rate of 12.5 cases per 100,000.<sup>14</sup>
- Alabama ranks 22<sup>nd</sup> in number of reported AIDS cases in the U.S. among all age groups. In 2007, there were a total of 391 new AIDS cases reported in Alabama.<sup>15</sup>
- Alabama ranks 26<sup>th</sup> in number of reported AIDS cases in the U.S. among young people ages 13–19. In 2007, there were a total of 3 AIDS cases reported among young people ages 13–19 in Alabama.<sup>16</sup>

### *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*

- Alabama ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in reported cases of Chlamydia among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 27.98 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 19.51 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 9,133 cases of Chlamydia reported among young people ages 15–19 in Alabama.<sup>17</sup>

- Alabama ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in reported cases of gonorrhea among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 9.10 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 4.52 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 2,972 cases of gonorrhea reported among young people ages 15–19 in Alabama.<sup>18</sup>
- Alabama ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in reported cases of primary and secondary syphilis among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 0.08 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 0.04 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 26 cases of syphilis reported among young people ages 15–19 in Alabama.<sup>19</sup>

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

*SIECUS is not aware of any examples of model programs, policies, or best practices being implemented in Alabama 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 comprehensive approaches to sex education being implemented in Alabama 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 Public Health and community-based organizations in Alabama received \$3,068,478 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2009.<sup>20</sup>

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

- Alabama received \$716,367 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2009. 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 Alabama Department of Public Health distributes federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds to seven sub-grantees, all of which are community-based organizations.
- 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.
- In Alabama, sub-grantees contributed to the match through in-kind services.

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

- Organizations in Alabama received \$2,352,111 in CBAE funding for Fiscal Year 2009.
- There are four CBAE grantees in Alabama, including two faith-based organizations, one community-based organization, and one health center.

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

- There are no AFLA grantees in Alabama.

A L A B A M A

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

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

- *ASPIRE: Live your life. Be free.*
- *Choosing the Best*
- *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>21</sup>**

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Title V	CBAE (Length of Grant)	AFLA (Length of Grant)
Alabama Department of Public Health  <a href="http://www.adph.org">www.adph.org</a>	\$716,367  (federal grant)		
Alabama Cooperative Extension System  <a href="http://www.aces.edu">www.aces.edu</a>	\$87,640  (sub-grant)		
Charles Henderson Memorial Association (d.b.a. Charles Henderson Child Health Center)  <a href="http://www.troybabydoc.com">www.troybabydoc.com</a>		\$740,211  (2006–2011)	
Circle of Care Center for Families  <a href="http://www.circleofcare.homestead.com">www.circleofcare.homestead.com</a>	\$45,000  (sub-grant)		
Crittenton Youth Services  <a href="http://www.willtowait.org">www.willtowait.org</a>	\$75,064  (sub-grant)	\$525,763  (2007–2012)	
Dale County Abstinence Advocacy Council	\$57,159  (sub-grant)		

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Title V	CBAE (Length of Grant)	AFLA (Length of Grant)
Lee County Youth Development Center. <a href="http://www.lcydc.org">www.lcydc.org</a>	\$76,987  (sub-grant)		
New Hope Baptist Church <a href="http://www.newhope2locations.com">www.newhope2locations.com</a>		\$600,000  (2006–2011)	
Sex and Family Education (S.A./E.), Inc. <a href="http://www.sexandfamilyeducation.org">www.sexandfamilyeducation.org</a>	\$150,000  (sub-grant)		
Teens Empowerment Awareness with ResolutionS, Inc. (TEARS) <a href="http://www.tearsinc.org">www.tearsinc.org</a>		\$486,137  (2008–2013)	
Wright & Associates, Inc. (d.b.a. AIM [Abstinence In Motion] Project) <a href="http://www.aimproject.com">www.aimproject.com</a>	\$74,322  (sub-grant)		

**Adolescent Health Contact<sup>22</sup>**

Sandy Powell  
Alabama Department of Public Health  
Main Office RSA Tower  
201 Monroe St., Suite 1350  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: (334) 206-2901

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**Alabama Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

ACLU of Alabama  
207 Montgomery Street, Suite 918  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: (334) 262-0304  
[www.aclualabama.org](http://www.aclualabama.org)

AIDS Alabama  
3521 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
S. Birmingham, AL 35222  
Phone: (205) 324-9822  
[www.aidsalabama.org](http://www.aidsalabama.org)

AIDS Action Coalition of North Alabama  
600 St. Clair Avenue, Building 6, Suite 14  
Huntsville, AL 35801  
Phone: (256) 536-4700  
[www.aidsactioncoalition.org](http://www.aidsactioncoalition.org)

Parents Families Friends of Lesbians  
and Gays – PFLAG  
4300 Hampton Heights Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35209  
Phone: (205) 871-5317  
[www.pflagbham.org](http://www.pflagbham.org)

Planned Parenthood of Alabama  
1211 27<sup>th</sup> Place South  
Birmingham, AL 35205  
Phone: (205) 322-2121  
[www.ppalabama.org](http://www.ppalabama.org)

South Alabama Cares  
P.O. Box 40296  
Mobile, AL 36640  
Phone: 251.471.5277  
[www.masshelps.org](http://www.masshelps.org)

**Alabama Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

Alabama Citizens for Life  
P.O. Box 184  
Montgomery, AL 36102  
Phone: (334) 666-6805  
[www.al4life.com](http://www.al4life.com)

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

The Alabama Pro-Life Coalition  
Education Fund  
P.O. Box 360627  
Birmingham, Alabama 35236  
Phone: (205) 335-1194  
[www.chooselifealabama.org](http://www.chooselifealabama.org)

National Physicians Center for Family  
Resources  
3171 Green Valley Road, Ste. 409  
Birmingham, AL 35243  
Phone: (205) 585-1993  
[www.physicianscenter.org](http://www.physicianscenter.org)

**Newspapers in Alabama<sup>23</sup>**

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

*Dothan Eagle*  
Newsroom  
227 N. Oates Street  
Dothan, AL 36303  
Phone: (334) 792-3141  
[www.dothaneagle.com](http://www.dothaneagle.com)

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*Decatur Daily*

Newsroom  
201 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue SE  
Decatur, AL 35601  
Phone: (256) 340-2433  
[www.decaturdaily.com](http://www.decaturdaily.com)

*Huntsville Times*

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

*Gadsden Times*

Newsroom  
401 Locust Street  
Gadsden, AL 35901  
Phone: (256) 549-2000  
[www.gadssdentimes.com](http://www.gadssdentimes.com)

*Montgomery Advertiser*

Newsroom  
425 Molton Street  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
Phone: (334) 551-0308  
[www.montgomeryadvertiser.com](http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com)

*Mobile Register*

Newsroom  
401 N. Water Street  
Mobile, AL 36602  
Phone: (251) 219-5454  
[www.mobileregister.com](http://www.mobileregister.com)

*Tuscaloosa News*

Newsroom  
315 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
Phone: (205) 722-0207  
[www.tuscaloosanews.com](http://www.tuscaloosanews.com)

*Times Daily*

Newsroom  
219 W. Tennessee Street  
Florence, AL 35630  
Phone: (256) 740-5743  
[www.timesdaily.com](http://www.timesdaily.com)

**Political Blogs in Alabama**

*Archiblog*

<http://blog.al.com/archiblog>

*Birmingham Blues*

[www.queervoicenet.net/kmcmullen](http://www.queervoicenet.net/kmcmullen)

*Legal Schnauzer*

[www.legalschnauzer.blogspot.com](http://www.legalschnauzer.blogspot.com)

*Left in Alabama*

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

*The World Around You*

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



<sup>1</sup> Ala. Code §§ 16-40A-2(a)(1) and (2).

<<http://www.legislature.state.al.us/CodeofAlabama/1975/16-40A-2.htm>>

<sup>2</sup> Ala Code § 16-40A-2(b); Ala. Code §§ 16-40A-2(c)(1)–(2), (8). Regarding the provision that students must be informed that homosexual conduct is a criminal offense, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision in *Lawrence v. Texas* that declared state laws criminalizing homosexual behavior to be unconstitutional in 2003.

<sup>3</sup> *Alabama Course of Study: Health Education* (Birmingham, AL: Alabama Department of Education, 2003), accessed 19 April 2010, <[https://docs.alsde.edu/documents/54/HE1\\_INT.rtf](https://docs.alsde.edu/documents/54/HE1_INT.rtf)>.

<sup>4</sup> Danice K. Eaton, et. al., “Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2009,” *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 59, no. SS-5 (4 June 2010): 98–109, accessed 4 June 2010, <<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss5905.pdf>>.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. *Teenage Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*, (Washington, DC: Guttmacher Institute, January 2010), accessed 5 March 2010, <<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/USTPTrends.pdf>>, Table 3.1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Table 3.2.

<sup>7</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>8</sup> U.S. *Teenage Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*, Table 3.2

<sup>9</sup> Martin, et. al, “Births: Final Data for 2006,” 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Table B.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. *Teenage Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*, Table 3.5.

<sup>12</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>13</sup> Slide 6: “Estimated Numbers of HIV/AIDS Cases among Adolescents 13 to 19 Years of Age, 2007—34 States,” *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>14</sup> *Ibid.*; “AIDS Case Rate per 100,000 Population, All Ages, 2007,” Kaiser Family Foundation, accessed 5 March 2010, <<http://www.statehealthfacts.org/comparetable.jsp?ind=513&cat=11&sub=120&yr=62&typ=1&sort=a>>.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Table 16.

<sup>16</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>17</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>18</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>19</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>20</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>21</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>22</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>23</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. 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](#).