



# SIECUS

State Profile

## CONNECTICUT

***Community-based organizations in Connecticut received \$599,800 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2008.<sup>1</sup>***

### **Connecticut Sexuality Education Law and Policy**

Connecticut does not require schools to teach sexuality education, but does require that schools teach human growth and development and disease prevention. Connecticut law also states, “Each local and regional board of education shall offer during the regular school day planned, ongoing and systematic instruction on acquired immune deficiency syndrome, as taught by legally qualified teachers.”

The Connecticut State Board of Education is charged with developing sexuality education curriculum guidelines that “shall include, but not be limited to, information on developing a curriculum including family planning, human sexuality, parenting, nutrition and the emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economic and social aspects of family life, provided the curriculum guides shall not include information pertaining to abortion as an alternative to family planning.” However, Connecticut statute also states that the instruction must be left to the discretion of local or regional boards of education.

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

See Connecticut Statutes Chapter 194 Sections 10-16b-f, and 10-19a-b.

### **Recent Legislation**

#### *Healthy Teens Act Introduced*

Assembly Bill 5591, introduced in February 2008 and also known as *An Act Concerning Healthy Teens*, would have required the department of education to implement a “healthy teens education grant program.” Under this program, “local and regional school boards of education” that have shown a history of teen health education programs would have applied for grants to “provide medically accurate health education.” The bill died in the House Committee on Appropriations.

#### *Legislation Helps Sexual Assault Victims Obtain Emergency Contraception*

Senate Bill 1343, introduced in February 2007, requires all licensed healthcare facilities to provide sexual assault victims with emergency contraception (EC) if requested. This requirement extends to Catholic healthcare facilities as well. The bill was signed by Governor M. Jodi Rell (R) on May 16, 2007 and is now law.

#### *Bill Prohibits Deprivation of Rights on Account of Sexual Orientation*

Senate Bill 1109, introduced in January 2007, prohibits “depriving an individual of rights, privileges, and immunities secured or protected by the state or federal laws or constitutions because of [his/her] sexual

## CONNECTICUT

orientation.”<sup>22</sup> Such a deprivation of rights is deemed a class A misdemeanor, and becomes a class D felony if property is damaged in an amount exceeding \$1,000 or the violator purposefully attempts to conceal his/her identity. The bill was signed by Governor Rell and put into law on October 1, 2007.

### *Bill to Allocate \$500,000 towards AIDS prevention*

House Bill 5077, introduced in January 2007 and referred to the Committee on Public Health, would have provided \$500,000 to the Department of Public Health for statewide AIDS prevention initiatives. The bill failed to move out of committee and died.

### **Connecticut’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note<sup>3</sup>**

- In 2007, 42% of female high school students and 43% of male high school students in Connecticut reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 4% of female high school students and 8% of male high school students in Connecticut 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 2007, 10% of female high school students and 15% of male high school students in Connecticut reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 12% of female high school students and 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 33% of female high school students and 30% of male high school students in Connecticut 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 34% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 59% of females and 67% of males in Connecticut reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 55% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 30% of females and 22% of males in Connecticut reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 13% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 23% of females and 34% of males in Connecticut reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 18% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, 92% of high school students in Connecticut reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 90% of high school students nationwide

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

- Connecticut was eligible for \$344,944 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2008.
- 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.
- Connecticut, however, chose not to apply for these funds due to the extraordinary restrictions placed upon how the money must be spent. Therefore, the state does not match funds nor does it have organizations supported by this type of federal money.

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

- There is one CBAE grantee in Connecticut: Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain (OICNB).
- There are no AFLA grantees in Connecticut.

#### Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain, \$599,800 (CBAE 2006–2011)

Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain (OICNB) is an affiliate chapter of Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, Inc. (OICA), a non-profit organization that describes itself as having 40 years of experience “in serving the poor, unemployed, underemployed and youth.” The organization seeks “to [enable] individuals to become self-sufficient, productive workers” and “prepares people for today’s workforce with quality life skills development, fundamental education, superior job skills training and employment readiness services.”<sup>4</sup>

OICNB contracts with OIC of Greater Bridgeport (Connecticut) and OIC of Wilson (North Carolina) to administer abstinence-only-until-marriage programs to young people ages 12–18 in the cities of New Britain and Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Wilson, North Carolina. OICNB received its CBAE grant in Fiscal Year 2006, and the abstinence grant makes up 75 percent of the organization’s annual revenue.

The OICNB abstinence program is designed to serve a maximum of 1,150 youth, including middle school and high school students recruited to the program from public and charter schools, community organizations, churches, and the government housing projects where OIC programs run. The program targets teens from low-income families, many of whom live in poverty or extreme poverty. Roughly 70 percent of participants are African-American, 20 percent are Hispanic, and 10 percent are of “mixed ethnic backgrounds.”

The program uses *Families United to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (FUPTP)*, an abstinence-only-until-marriage curriculum and its supplement, *Healthy Marriages*. There are 58 lessons included in the curriculum, and the supplement offers 11 lessons which define marriage as “a legal union between one man and one woman,” discuss the influences on marriage, and present the components of a healthy marriage.

*Families United to Prevent Teen Pregnancy* was one of the four abstinence-only-until-marriage programs evaluated in a report sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. The report findings showed only modest evidence that FUPTP affected teens’ attitudes toward abstinence after the first year of the program.<sup>5</sup>

Other components of OICNB’s program include social events and field trips, community service activities, financial literacy courses, and a community-organized abstinence rally. At the end of the program students participate in a “recognition ceremony” where they are invited to “make a formal commitment to abstain from sex until marriage.”

CONNECTICUT

Research found that 88 percent of young people who took a virginity pledge ultimately had sexual intercourse before marriage. Under certain conditions these pledges may help some adolescents delay sexual intercourse. When they work, pledges help this select group of adolescents delay the onset of sexual intercourse for an average of 18 months—far short of marriage. Researchers found that pledges only worked when taken by a small group of students. Pledges taken by a whole class were ineffective. More importantly, the studies also found that those young people who took a pledge were one-third less likely to use contraception when they did become sexually active than their peers who had not pledged. These teens are therefore more vulnerable to the risks of unprotected sexual activity such as unintended pregnancy and STDs, including HIV/AIDS. Further research has confirmed that although some students who take pledges delay intercourse, ultimately they are equally as likely to contract an STD as their non-pledging peers. The study also found that STD rates were higher in communities where a significant proportion (over 20 percent) of the young people had taken virginity pledges.<sup>6</sup>

**Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2008**

<b>Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee</b>  <b>Length of Grant</b>	<b>Amount of Grant</b>	<b>Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)</b>
Opportunities Industrialization Center of New Britain  2006–2011	\$599,800	CBAE

**Adolescent Health Contact<sup>7</sup>**

Barbara Pickett  
 Maternal and Child Health Unit  
 Connecticut Department of Health  
 410 Capitol Avenue, MS #11 MAT  
 PO Box 340308  
 Hartford, CT 06106  
 Phone: (860) 509-8057

**Connecticut Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

ACLU of Connecticut  
 32 Grand Street  
 Hartford, CT 06106  
 Phone: (860) 247-9823  
[www.acluct.org](http://www.acluct.org)

GLSEN Connecticut  
 P.O. Box 2405  
 Stamford, CT 06906  
 Phone: (203) 288-2399  
[www.glsen.org/connecticut](http://www.glsen.org/connecticut)

C O N N E C T I C U T

NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut  
135 Broad Street  
Hartford, CT 06105  
Phone: (860) 524-1086  
[www.pro-choicect.org](http://www.pro-choicect.org)

Planned Parenthood of Connecticut  
345 Whitney Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06511  
Phone: (203) 865-5158  
[www.ppct.org](http://www.ppct.org)

**Connecticut Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

Connecticut Right to Life Corporation  
PO Box 2343  
Waterbury, CT 06722  
Phone: (203) 757-5213  
[www.ct4life.com](http://www.ct4life.com)

Family Institute of Connecticut  
77 Buckingham Street  
Hartford, CT 06126  
Phone: (860) 548-0066  
[www.ctfamily.org](http://www.ctfamily.org)

**Newspapers in Connecticut<sup>8</sup>**

*Connecticut Post*  
Newsroom  
410 State Street  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
Phone: (203) 333-0161  
[www.connpost.com](http://www.connpost.com)

*The Day*  
Newsroom  
47 Eugene O'Neill Drive  
New London, CT 06320  
Phone: (860) 701-4372  
[www.theday.com](http://www.theday.com)

*The Hartford Courant*  
Newsroom  
285 Broad Street  
Hartford, CT 06115  
Phone: (860) 241-6200  
[www.courant.com](http://www.courant.com)

*Journal Inquirer*  
Newsroom  
306 Progress Drive  
Manchester, CT 06040  
Phone: (860) 646-0500  
[www.journalinquirer.com](http://www.journalinquirer.com)

*New Haven Register*  
Newsroom  
40 Sargent Drive  
New Haven, CT 06511  
Phone: (203) 789-5730  
[www.nhregister.com](http://www.nhregister.com)

*The News-Times*  
Newsroom  
333 Main Street  
Danbury, CT 06810  
Phone: (203) 744-5100  
[www.newstimes.com](http://www.newstimes.com)

*The Norwalk Advocate*  
Newsroom  
75 Tresser Boulevard  
Stamford, CT 06901  
Phone: (203) 750-5325  
[www.norwalkadvocate.com](http://www.norwalkadvocate.com)

*Norwich Bulletin*  
Newsroom  
66 Franklin Street  
Norwich, CT 06360  
Phone: (860) 887-9211  
[www.norwichbulletin.com](http://www.norwichbulletin.com)

C O N N E C T I C U T

*Record-Journal*  
Newsroom  
11 Crown Street  
Meriden, CT 06450  
Phone: (203) 317-2245  
[www.myrecordjournal.com](http://www.myrecordjournal.com)

*Waterbury Republican-American*  
Newsroom  
389 Meadow Street  
Waterbury, CT 06702  
Phone: (203) 574-3636 ext. 1443  
[www.rep-am.com](http://www.rep-am.com)

---

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the federal government's fiscal year, 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 2008 began on October 1, 2007 and ended on September 30, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Connecticut Public Act No. 07-62.

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Danice K. Eaton, et. al., "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2007," Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 57.SS-4 (6 June 2008), accessed 4 June 2008, <<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>>.

<sup>4</sup> "Sub-contractor Biographies," Freedom of Information Act, CBAE abstinence grant application, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Trenholm, et. al., "Impacts of Four Title V, Section 510 Abstinence Education Programs: Final Report," (Trenton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., April 2007), accessed 4 March 2009, <<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/>>.

<sup>6</sup> Peter Bearman and Hannah Brückner "Promising the Future: Virginity Pledges and the Transition to First Intercourse." *American Journal of Sociology* 106.4 (2001): 859-912; Peter Bearman and Hannah Brückner, "After the promise: The STD consequences of adolescent virginity pledges," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 36.4 (2005): 271-278.

<sup>7</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>8</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](#).