



Colorado

Colorado received \$2,351,266 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2003.¹

Colorado Sexuality Education Law

Colorado school districts can decide whether to teach sexuality education and may address the subject in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The Colorado Department of Education is charged with providing guidelines as to the length of courses, the subjects included, and the manner in which these subjects are addressed. The department also provides guidelines on teacher training in sexuality education. This training includes information about high-risk behaviors. Abstinence by school-aged children must be emphasized whenever sexuality education and/or human reproduction is taught.

Parents or guardians must be notified if a sexuality education course is taught and given an opportunity to review the curricula. Parents may send written notice that they do not want their child to attend all or part of sexuality education. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

However, if a school receives state funding to teach sexuality education, then parents must receive written notification about the topics and materials to be presented and must give permission before a student can participate in “any program discussing or teaching sexuality and human reproduction.” This is referred to as an “opt-in” policy.

See Colorado Statutes 22-25-104, 22-25-110 and 25-4-1405.

Recent Legislation

The Colorado legislature does not carry bills over from one session to the next. Related 2003 and 2004 bills are listed. Colorado’s legislative session ended on May 5, 2004.

Bill Providing Parental “Opt-Out” Option for Sexuality Education, 2004 Session

As introduced on February 19, 2004, House Bill 1375 would have prohibited school districts from providing instruction relating to “sexual lifestyles that are alternative to heterosexual relationships” except in the context of risk and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

The bill was amended in March 2004 to require that school districts provide written notification of any human sexuality instruction and include detailed and substantive outlines of such instruction. Further, school districts must advise parents and guardians that they may

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 2003 begins on October 1, 2002 and ends on September 30, 2003.

excuse their children from such instruction. All prior sections on “alternative lifestyles” were deleted.

The bill passed the House on March 26, passed the Senate on April 30, and was signed by Governor Bill Owens (R) on May 28, 2004.

Abstinence Bill Died, 2004 Session

As introduced on April 13, 2004, Senate Bill 227 would have required Colorado to incorporate the federal definition of “abstinence education” into any health-related education program that included instruction on HIV/AIDS or STDs.

The bill failed to pass the Senate on April 20, 2004 and subsequently died.

Joint Resolution Supporting “Pure By Choice” Rally Signed, 2004 Session

Introduced on March 2, 2004, House Joint Resolution 1025 was signed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate on March 16 and March 18, respectively. The resolution supports “those youth who choose abstinence” and recognizes that “our nation is at a crossroads regarding sexual purity and the dignity of the human person, especially on college campuses.”

The Pure By Choice rally was held on March 6, 2004 at the University of Denver.

Events of Note

SIECUS is not aware of any recent events of note regarding sexuality education in Colorado.

Colorado’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- In 2001, 40% of female high school students and 44% of male high school students in Colorado reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 43% of female high school students and 49% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2001, 4% of female high school students and 8% of male high school students in Colorado 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 2001, 10% of female high school students and 15% of male high school students in Colorado reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 11% of female high school students and 17% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2001, 30% of female high school students and 28% of male high school students in Colorado reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual intercourse in the three months prior to the survey) compared to 33% of females and 33% of males nationwide.

² Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: J. Grunbaum, et. al., “Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance — United States, 2001,” *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 51, no.SS-4, June 28, 2002, pp. 1-64. Available online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>. Colorado did not participate in the 2003 YRBS.

- In 2001, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 27% of females and 37% of males in Colorado reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 31% of males nationwide.
- In 2001, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 59% of females and 75% of males in Colorado reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 51% of females and 65% of males nationwide.
- In 2001, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 21% of females and 13% of males in Colorado reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 15% of males nationwide.
- In 2001, 5% of female high school students and 3% of male high school students in Colorado 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 2001, 82% of high school students in Colorado reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 89% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, Colorado's abortion rate was 19 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.³
- In 2001, Colorado's birth rate was 47 per 1,000 females ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 45 per 1,000 nationwide.⁴

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Colorado received \$544,383 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2003. 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. Colorado matched the federal funding with \$408,287. The funding is controlled by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment which formed the State Abstinence Education Steering Committee. The committee allocates money to community based groups.

Colorado's Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage project focuses on youth between the ages of ten to 17 with a special emphasis on youth ten to 14 years of age. Specifically, it focuses on youth from low income areas as well as African-American youth, Latino/a youth, Native American youth, Spanish speaking youth, youth with special needs, and parents.

³ U.S. *Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information*, (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, February, 2004). Available online at www.guttmacher.org.

⁴ A. Papillo, et.al., *Facts at a Glance*, (Washington, DC: Child Trends, February, 2004).

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

There are three SPRANS–CBAE grantees in Colorado: Bethany Crisis Pregnancy Center, Friends First, and Pueblo Youth Project. There is one AFLA grantee in Colorado: Colorado State University.

Friends First provides speakers and trainings for parents, students, teachers, and policymakers. It also runs after-school and mentoring programs for youth. The organization wrote and uses the *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted) Training* curriculum. SIECUS’ own review of *WAIT Training* found that it contains messages of fear and shame and biased views on gender, sexual orientation, and family type.

Friends First’s website includes a question and answer section specifically for parents. One question asks: What do I do about this aggressive teen-age girl that is “coming-on” to my son? The answer states, in part:

Many guys feel intense pressure from girls in their peer group. The girls mature faster and have false expectations and ideals about their sexuality from the culture, especially if a lack of parental communication and boundary setting exists in the home.

Under the “Facts and Stats” section of the website, there is a fact sheet entitled, “Cost of Teen Pregnancies: You Are Paying For Government Repair Programs.” Another fact sheet on the benefits of marriage states that married people have a lower risk of mental illness and suicide.

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Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2003

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant Colorado Department of Public Health www.cdphe.state.co.us/ps/abstinence/abstinencehom.asp	\$544,383 federal/ \$408,287 state	Title V
Bethany Crisis Pregnancy Center 2003-2006	\$631,873	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)
Friends First, Inc. 2003-2006	\$630,222	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)
Pueblo Youth Project 2003-2006	\$319,788	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)
Colorado State University 2002-2003	\$225,000	AFLA

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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 4300 Cherry Creek Dr. South
 Denver, CO 80246
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Colorado Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of Colorado
 400 Corona St.
 Denver, CO 80218
 Phone: (303) 777-5482
www.aclu-co.org

Colorado AIDS Project
 701 E. Colfax, Suite 212
 P.O. Box 18529
 Denver, CO 80218
 Phone: (303) 837-0166
www.coloradoaidsproject.org

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The FENIX Project (sponsored by Mi Casa Resource Center for Women)
360 Acoma St.
Denver CO 80223
Phone: (303) 573-1302
www.aidscentral.com/FENIX

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender
Community Center of Colorado
P.O. Box 9798
Denver, CO 80209-0798
Phone: (303) 733-7743
www.coloradoglbt.org

NARAL Pro-Choice Colorado
1905 Sherman St., Suite 800
Denver, Colorado 80203
Phone: (303) 394-1973
www.prochoicecolorado.org

Planned Parenthood of the Rocky
Mountains
950 Broadway
Denver, CO 80203
Phone: (303) 321-PLAN
www.pprm.org

Religious Coalition for Reproductive
Choice
PO Box 37414
Denver, CO 80237
Phone: (303) 756-9996
www.corcrc.org

Colorado Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Colorado Right to Life Committee
2050 S. Oneida St., Suite 116
Denver, CO 80224
Phone: (303) 753-9394
www.coloradorighttolife.org

Focus on the Family
8605 Explorer Dr.
Colorado Springs, CO 80995
www.family.org

Independence Institute
14142 Denver West Pkwy.
Suite 185
Golden, CO 80401
www.i2i.org

Rocky Mountain Family Council
8704 Yates Dr., Suite 205
Westminster, CO 80030
www.rmfc.org

Youth for Christ
7670 S. Vaughn Ct.
Englewood, CO 80112
www.gospelcom.net/yfc

Newspapers in Colorado

Daily Camera

Lisa Marshall
Medical/Health Editor
1048 Pearl St.
Boulder, CO 80302
Phone: (303) 473-1357

Daily Reporter-Herald

Kelly Serrano
Medical/Health Reporter
201 E. 5th St.
Loveland, CO 80537
Phone: (970) 669-5050

The Daily Sentinel

Anna Beaty
Medical/Health Writer
734 S. 7th St.
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Phone: (970) 256-4310

Daily Times-Call

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Denver Post

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Fort Collins Coloradoan

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The Gazette

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Greeley Tribune

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The Pueblo Chieftain

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Rocky Mountain News

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