



SIECUS

State Profile

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Maine Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Maine's sexuality education law mandates that the state Department of Health and Human Services "undertake initiatives to implement effective, comprehensive family life education services."¹ The state must provide:

- training for teachers, parents, and community members;
- forums among youth and community members in communities with a high need for sexuality education;
- staff to provide trainings, develop curricula, and evaluate the program;
- funding for issue management and policy development training for school boards, superintendents, principals, and administrators; and
- funding for programs that have shown outstanding work around sexuality education.²

"Comprehensive family life education" must be taught in kindergarten through 12th grade. The information provided must be medically accurate and age-appropriate, and must respect community values and encourage parent-child communication. Programs must teach about abstinence, healthy relationships, contraception, and conflict resolution. No specific curriculum is mandated.

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 Maine Revised Statutes Annotated title 22, §§ 1902, 1910, and 1911.

Recent Legislation

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

Maine's Youth: Statistical Information of Note³

- In 2009, 46% of female high school students and 46% of male high school students in Maine reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 46% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2009, 3% of female high school students and 7% of male high school students in Maine reported having had sexual intercourse before age 13 compared to 3% of female high school students and 8% of male high school students nationwide.

MAINE

- In 2009, 11% of female high school students and 13% of male high school students in Maine 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, 37% of female high school students and 33% of male high school students in Maine 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, 57% of females and 64% of males in Maine 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, 39% of females and 29% of males in Maine reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 23% of females and 16% of males nationwide.
- In 2009, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 17% of females and 24% of males in Maine 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, 87% of high school students in Maine reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 87% of high school students nationwide.

Maine Youth Sexual Health Statistics

Teen Pregnancy, Birth, and Abortion

- Maine's teen pregnancy rate ranks 48th in the U.S., with a rate of 43 pregnancies per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 70 pregnancies per 1,000.⁴ There were a total of 1,950 pregnancies among young women ages 15–19 reported in 2005, the most recent year for which data are available, in Maine.⁵
- Maine's teen birth rate ranked 46th in the U.S. in 2005, with a rate of 24.4 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19 compared to the national rate of 40.5 births per 1,000.⁶ In 2005, there were a total of 1,112 live births reported to young women ages 15–19 in Maine.⁷
- 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 2005.⁸ Maine's teen birth rate also increased between 2005 and 2006, from 24.4 to 25.8 births per 1,000 young women ages 15–19.⁹
- Maine's teen abortion rate ranks 31st in the U.S., with a rate of 10 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 472 abortions reported among young women ages 15–19 in Maine.¹⁰

HIV and AIDS

- Maine ranks 41st in cases of HIV infection diagnosed in the U.S. among all age groups. In 2007, there were a total of 36 new cases of HIV infection diagnosed in Maine.¹¹

- Maine’s AIDS rate ranks 43rd in the U.S., with a rate of 3.5 cases per 100,000 population compared to the national rate of 12.5 cases per 100,000.¹²
- Maine ranks 44th in number of reported AIDS cases in the U.S. among all age groups. In 2007, there were a total of 46 new AIDS cases reported in Maine.¹³
- In 2007, there were no AIDS cases reported among young people ages 13–19 in Maine.¹⁴

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- Maine ranks 48th in reported cases of Chlamydia among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 8.76 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 19.51 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 782 cases of Chlamydia reported among young people ages 15–19 in Maine.¹⁵
- Maine ranks 49th in reported cases of gonorrhea among young people ages 15–19 in the U.S., with an infection rate of 0.21 cases per 1,000 compared to the national rate of 4.52 cases per 1,000. In 2008, there were a total of 19 cases of gonorrhea reported among young people ages 15–19 in Maine.¹⁶
- There are no available statewide data on the rate of syphilis among young people.

Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Education

*SIECUS has identified some examples of model programs, policies, and best practices being implemented in Maine public schools that provide a more comprehensive approach to sex education for young people.*¹⁷

Comprehensive Sex Education Programs in Public Schools

Portland Public Schools

For approximately 30 years, Portland Public Schools has provided human sexuality education to students in elementary through high school.¹⁸ The school district’s “Family Living and Human Sexuality” program is provided to students in grades four, five, six through eight, and nine and ten. The program is taught district-wide by three, certified sex education teachers—one each for elementary, middle, and high school. Portland Public Schools has been the only public school district in Maine to fund full-time staff positions for sex education.¹⁹

In elementary school, the program consists of a six-week course that addresses human anatomy, the male and female reproductive systems, puberty, sexual abuse and harassment, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among other topics discussed. At the high school level the course addresses additional topics, including dating violence and contraception.²⁰

The Portland School Committee voted in April 2010 to end the program due to budget shortfalls at the completion of the 2010–2011 school year. The school district plans to incorporate human sexuality education into the health curriculum. Two of the three sex education teachers are expected to retire at the end of the 2009–2010 school year. The remaining sex educator will stay on staff for one more year and assist the district in transitioning the human sexuality program.²¹ It is expected that district health educators will undergo teacher training to prepare them to teach sex education beginning in the 2011–2012 school year.²²

While the program has been threatened with budget cuts for the past nine years, this is the first time the School Committee has voted to cut its funds. Supporters of the program have expressed concern that the lack of consistency and standardization of comprehensive health curricula across the district will impact the quality of sex education students receive—especially in grades four, five, six, eight, and nine, where no comprehensive health education course is offered. Due to some teachers’ discomfort and lack

of experience with the material, proponents have also expressed concern that students will not receive complete instruction and be deprived of information that addresses difficult sexuality education topics.²³

We encourage you to submit any updated or additional information on comprehensive approaches to sex education being implemented in Maine public schools for inclusion in future publications of the SIECUS State Profiles. Please visit SIECUS' "Contact Us" webpage at www.siecus.org to share information. Select "state policy" as the subject heading.

Federal Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs

Maine did not receive any abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2009.²⁴

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until Marriage Funding

- Maine chose not to participate in the Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage program in Fiscal Year 2009. The state was eligible for approximately \$161,398 in funding. 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 would have received three quarters of the total funding allocated for the full fiscal year.

Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) Funding

- There are no CBAE grantees in Maine.

Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Funding

- There are no AFLA grantees in Maine.

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Curricula

SIECUS is not aware of any commercially available abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula used in Maine.

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.

Adolescent Health Contact²⁵

Nancy Birkhimer
Teen and Young Adult Health Program
Bureau of Health, Department of Human Services
11 State House Station, Key Bank Plaza, 5th Floor
Augusta, ME 04333
Phone: (207) 287-5361

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Maine Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Family Planning Association of Maine
P.O. Box 587
Augusta, ME 04332
Phone: (207) 662-7524
www.mainefamilyplanning.org

Frannie Peabody Center:
Comprehensive HIV and AIDS
Services
335 Valley Street
Portland, ME 04102
Phone: (207) 774-6877
www.peabodycenter.org

Maine AIDS Alliance
48 Free Street
Portland, ME 04101
Phone: (207) 899-9983
www.maineaidsalliance.org

Maine Civil Liberties Union
401 Cumberland Avenue, Suite 105
Portland, ME 04101
Phone: (207) 774-5444
www.mclu.org

Planned Parenthood of Northern New
England
51 US Route 1, Suite C
Scarborough, ME
Phone: (800) 854-9762
www.ppnne.org

Maine Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Christian Civic League of Maine
70 Sewall Street
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: (207) 622-7634
www.cclmaine.org

Newspapers in Maine²⁶

Bangor Daily News
Newsroom
P.O. Box 1329
Bangor, ME 04402
Phone: (207) 990-8000
www.bangornews.com

Kennebec Journal
Newsroom
274 Western Avenue
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: (207) 623-3811
www.kennebecjournal.mainetoday.com

Journal Tribune
Newsroom
457 Alfred Road
Biddeford, ME 04005
Phone: (207) 282-1535
www.journaltribune.com

Morning Sentinel
Newsroom
31 Front Street
Waterville, ME 04901
Phone: (207) 621-5645
www.morningsentinel.mainetoday.com

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The Portland Phoenix
Newsroom
16 York Street
Portland, ME 04101
Phone: (207) 773-8900
www.thephoenix.com/Portland

Portland Press Herald
Newsroom
P.O. Box 1460
Portland, ME 04104
Phone: (207) 791-6650
www.pressherald.mainetoday.com

Sun Journal
Newsroom
104 Park Street
Lewiston, ME 04240
Phone: (207) 784-5411
www.sunjournal.com

The Times Record
Newsroom
3 Business Parkway
Brunswick, ME 04011
Phone: (207) 729-3311
www.timesrecord.com

Political Blogs in Maine

AsMaineGoeslolz!
www.asmainegoeslolz.com

Augusta Insider
www.augustainsider.us

Dirigo Blue
www.dirigoblue.com

Maine Politics
www.mainepolitics.net

Rapid Dissent
www.rapiddissent.com

¹ Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 22, § 1910, <<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/22/title22sec1910.html>>

² Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. Tit. 22, §§ 1910(1)–(4), <<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/22/title22sec1910.html>>

³ 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>>.

⁴ *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.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Table 3.2.

⁶ 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>, Table B.

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

⁸ Martin, et. al, “Births: Final Data for 2006,” 4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Table B.

¹⁰ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancies, Births, and Abortions: National and State Trends and Trends by Race and Ethnicity*, Table 3.5.

¹¹ “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.

¹² *Ibid.*; “AIDS Case Rate per 100,000 Population, All Ages, 2007,” (Menlo Park, CA: 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>>.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Table 16.

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- ¹⁴ 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>>.
- ¹⁵ “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.
- ¹⁶ 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.
- ¹⁷ This is by no means a complete list of all comprehensive programming and policies related to sexuality education, but rather some examples of best practices and model programs that SIECUS identified.
- ¹⁸ Kelly Bouchard, “Changes in Sex Ed May force Overhaul of Health Program,” *Portland Press Herald*, 30 March 2010, accessed 23 May 2010, <http://www.pressherald.com/news/changes-in-sex-ed-may-force-overhaul-of-health-program_2010-03-30.html>.
- ¹⁹ Elbert Aull, “Proposed Cut Renews Sex Education Debate,” *Portland Press Herald*, 2 January 2010, <http://www.pressherald.com/archive/city-again-to-weigh-proposed-sex-ed-cuts_2009-01-01.html>.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Kelly Bouchard, “Changes in Sex Ed May force Overhaul of Health Program.”
- ²² Ibid.
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ This refers to the federal government’s fiscal year, which begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th. 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.
- ²⁵ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.
- ²⁶ 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](#).