



# SIECUS

State Profile

## MASSACHUSETTS

***Community-based organizations in Massachusetts received \$1,409,826 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2008.<sup>1</sup>***

### **Massachusetts Sexuality Education Law and Policy**

Massachusetts does not require sexuality education and instead allows local school boards to make such decisions. In 1990, the Massachusetts Board of Education approved a policy that:

[U]rges local school districts to create programs which make instruction about AIDS/HIV available to every Massachusetts student at every grade level. These programs should be developed in a manner which respects local control over education and involves parents and representatives of the community. The Board believes that AIDS/HIV prevention education is most effective when integrated into a comprehensive health education and human services program.

In addition, the *Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework* suggests curricula for schools.

If a community decides to implement sexuality education, it must develop standards with the guidance of community stakeholders, including parents, students, teachers, counseling professionals, health professionals, representatives of local religious groups, and representatives of local social service and health agencies. In addition, the program must be taught in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade; must discuss HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy, family violence, sound health practices; and must “define sexual orientation using the correct terminology (such as heterosexual and gay and lesbian).”

The school district must also ensure that parents and/or guardians receive notification about the sexuality education policy. Parents may remove their children from any or all of this instruction. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See General Laws of Massachusetts, Title XII, Chapter 69 Section 1L, Chapter 71, Section 1, Section 32A, and Section 38O; and *Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Framework*.

### **Recent Legislation**

#### *Legislation to Ban Funding for Abstinence Programs*

House Bill 1172, introduced in January 2007, would have banned any state agency or political subdivision of Massachusetts from applying for Title V or any other federal grant for abstinence-only education programs. The bill was discharged from the Joint Committee on Higher Education and was sent to the Joint Committee on Public Health on March 12, 2007 but failed to move again and died.

*Bill to Require Parental Consent for Sex Education*

House Bill 521, introduced in January 2007, would have required students to have written parental/guardian consent before participating in public-school sex education. This is known as an “opt-in” policy. The bill also asserted that no public school teacher or employee who feels that the curriculum violates his or her religious beliefs shall be required to be involved. The bill was sent to the Joint Committee on Higher Education; it received a public hearing on May 29, 2007 and was referred to the Committee on Joint Rules. It was discharged to the Committee on House Rules; however, no further action was taken.

**Massachusetts’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note<sup>2</sup>**

- In 2007, 44% of female high school students and 45% of male high school students in Massachusetts reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2004, 4% of female high school students and 9% of male high school students in Massachusetts 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, 11% of female high school students and 14% of male high school students in Massachusetts 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, 34% of female high school students and 31% of male high school students in Massachusetts 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 63% of males in Massachusetts 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, 25% of females and 13% of males in Massachusetts 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, 22% of females and 28% of males in Massachusetts 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, 89% of high school students in Massachusetts reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 90% of high school students nationwide.

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### *Boston, Massachusetts*

- In 2007, 49% of female high school students and 64% of male high school students in Boston, Massachusetts 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 20% of male high school students in Boston, Massachusetts 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, 11% of female high school students and 33% of male high school students in Boston, Massachusetts 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, 35% of female high school students and 43% of male high school students in Boston, Massachusetts 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, 61% of females and 74% of males in Boston, Massachusetts reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 55% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 16% of females and 10% of males in Boston, Massachusetts reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 15% of males nationwide.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 16% of females and 26% of males in Boston, Massachusetts 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, 77% of high school students in Boston, Massachusetts reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 90% of high school students nationwide.

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

- Massachusetts was eligible for \$712,241 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.
- Massachusetts, 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.

In October 2007, Massachusetts decided no longer to participate in the Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage program. In rejecting the funding, Governor Deval Patrick's (D) administration cited the Mathematica study commissioned by Congress which found that students who participate in abstinence-only-until-marriage programs are just as likely to engage in sexual activity as their peers who do not. The decision went into effect for Fiscal Year 2008.

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

- There are two CBAE grantees in Massachusetts: A Woman's Concern and Congregación Leon de Juda.
- There is one AFLA grantee in Massachusetts: Boston Medical Center.

*SIECUS has compiled some examples of the use of federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Massachusetts:*

#### A Woman's Concern, \$600,000 (CBAE 2006–2011)

A Woman's Concern describes its work as, "Focused on allowing [patients] to make healthy, informed and livable choices."<sup>4</sup> The organization runs several crisis pregnancy centers. Crisis pregnancy centers typically advertise as providing medical services and then use anti-abortion propaganda, misinformation, and fear and shame tactics to dissuade women facing unintended pregnancy from exercising their right to choose. In Fiscal Year 2007, 38 percent of the organization's funding came from CBAE dollars.<sup>5</sup>

The organization is run by Reverend John Ensor, an ordained Baptist minister and author of several books, including *Doing Things Right in Matters of the Heart: Dating Guidelines for Christians*.<sup>6</sup>

In 2006, the former medical director of A Woman's Concern, Eric Keroack, was appointed to the role of Deputy Assistant Secretary for Population Affairs at U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). This appointment put Dr. Keroack in charge of \$283 million in annual family-planning grants that are "designed to provide access to contraceptive supplies and information."<sup>7</sup> However, under Dr. Keroack's leadership, A Woman's Concern did not believe that women should have access to birth control. It stated that "the crass commercialization and distribution of birth control is demeaning to women, degrading of human sexuality and adverse to human health and happiness."<sup>8</sup> In April 2007, Dr. Keroack resigned from his position at HHS following notification by the Massachusetts Medicaid office that it had launched an investigation into his private practice.<sup>9</sup> The Board of Registration in Medicine also issued warnings to Keroack based on a complaint that he had overmedicated a patient, prescribing her powerful psychotherapeutic drugs, and had "brainwashed" the patient into believing she was "severely depressed."<sup>10</sup>

A Woman's Concern runs an abstinence-only-until-marriage program called "Healthy Futures." The Healthy Futures program has two curricula—one for sixth grade students and one for students in grades seven through 12.<sup>11</sup> The curricula are designed to be presented in 50-minute classroom periods over five consecutive days. In addition, Healthy Futures has a Peer Education Program and offers parent education programs through schools either in conjunction with a student classroom presentation or separately.<sup>12</sup>

The crisis pregnancy center sub-contracts with Lowell Mission Church to provide its Healthy Futures programming.<sup>13</sup> The church's mission statement reads, "To SHARE the good news of JESUS CHRIST with children, teens, and adults through relationships, helping them to GROW in God's word so they may HONOR God, SERVE Christ and others, and become part of God's FAMILY."<sup>14</sup>

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Congregación Leon de Juda, \$600,000 (CBAE 2008–2013)

The congregation states: “Our goal as a church is to share God’s word and the principles it contains. We want to impact all the aspects of our community and conquer all for Christ.”<sup>15</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>
A Woman’s Concern 2006–2011 <a href="http://www.awomansconcern.org">www.awomansconcern.org</a>	\$600,000	CBAE
Congregación Leon de Juda 2008–2013 <a href="http://www.leondejuda.org">www.leondejuda.org</a>	\$600,000	CBAE
Boston Medical Center 2004–2009 <a href="http://www.bmc.org">www.bmc.org</a>	\$209,826	AFLA

**Adolescent Health Contact<sup>16</sup>**

Samuel Louis, MPH  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
250 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
Phone: (617) 624-5905

**Massachusetts Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

ACLU of Massachusetts  
211 Congress Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02110  
Phone: (617) 482-3170  
[www.aclu-mass.org](http://www.aclu-mass.org)

AIDS Action Committee of Massachusetts  
294 Washington Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02108  
Phone: (617) 437-6200  
[www.aac.org](http://www.aac.org)

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Greater Boston National Organization for Women  
1105 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
Phone: (617) 254-9130  
[www.bostonnow.org](http://www.bostonnow.org)

Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy  
105 Chauncy Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02111  
Phone: (617) 482-9122  
[www.massteenpregnancy.org](http://www.massteenpregnancy.org)

Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus  
P.O. Box 246, State House  
Boston, MA 02133  
Phone: (617) 248-0776  
[www.mglpc.org](http://www.mglpc.org)

NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts  
15 Court Square, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02108  
Phone: (617) 556-8800  
[www.prochoicemass.org](http://www.prochoicemass.org)

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts  
1055 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
Phone: (617) 616-1660  
[www.plannedparenthood.org/ma](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/ma)

Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice  
Massachusetts  
P.O. Box 1129  
Brookline, MA 02446  
Phone: (617) 522-2964  
[www.rcrcofma.org](http://www.rcrcofma.org)

**Massachusetts Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

Massachusetts Family Institute  
100 Sylvan Road, Suite 625  
Woburn, MA 01801  
Phone: (781) 569-0400  
[www.mafamily.org](http://www.mafamily.org)

Operation Rescue: Boston  
P.O. Box 870037  
Milton Village, MA 02187  
Phone: (781) 849-6026  
[www.orboston.org](http://www.orboston.org)

Massachusetts Citizens for Life  
The Schrafft Center  
529 Main Street  
Boston, MA 02129  
Phone: (617) 242-4199  
[www.masscitizensforlife.org](http://www.masscitizensforlife.org)

**Newspapers in Massachusetts<sup>17</sup>**

*Boston Globe*  
Newsroom  
135 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125  
Phone: (617) 929-2000  
[www.boston.com](http://www.boston.com)

*Boston Herald*  
Newsroom  
One Herald Square  
Boston, MA 02118  
Phone: (617) 426-3000  
[www.bostonherald.com](http://www.bostonherald.com)

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*Boston Metro*  
Newsroom  
320 Congress Street  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02210  
Phone: (617) 210-7905  
[www.metrobostonnews.com](http://www.metrobostonnews.com)

*The Boston Phoenix*  
Newsroom  
126 Brookline Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
Phone: (617) 536-5390  
[www.thephoenix.com](http://www.thephoenix.com)

*Cape Cod Times*  
Newsroom  
319 Main Street  
Hyannis, MA 02601  
Phone: (508) 775-1200  
[www.capecodonline.com](http://www.capecodonline.com)

*The Eagle-Tribune*  
Newsroom  
100 Turnpike Street  
North Andover, MA 01845  
Phone: (978) 946-2000  
[www.eagletribune.com](http://www.eagletribune.com)

*MetroWest Daily News*  
Newsroom  
33 New York Avenue  
Framingham, MA  
Phone: (508) 626-4412  
[www.metrowestdailynews.com](http://www.metrowestdailynews.com)

*The Patriot Ledger*  
Newsroom  
400 Crown Colony Drive  
Quincy, MA 02269  
Phone: (617) 786-7026  
[www.wickedlocal.com/patriotledger](http://www.wickedlocal.com/patriotledger)

*The Republican*  
Newsroom  
1860 Main Street  
Springfield, MA 01101  
Phone: (413) 788-1200  
[www.masslive.com/republican](http://www.masslive.com/republican)

*Telegram & Gazette*  
Newsroom  
20 Franklin Street  
Box 15012  
Worcester, MA 01615  
Phone: (508) 793-9100  
[www.telegram.com](http://www.telegram.com)

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<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> 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>3</sup> D. 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>>.

<sup>4</sup> "About Us," A Woman's Concern, accessed 18 October 2008, <<http://www.awomansconcern.org/boston/about/>>.

<sup>5</sup> A Woman's Concern, IRS 990 Form, Fiscal Year 2007, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> C. Lee, "Bush Choice for Family-Planning Post Criticized," *Washington Post*, 17 November 2006, accessed 12 February 2007, <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/16/AR2006111601929.html?referrer=emailarticle>>.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> A. Estes, "Doctor who Quit US Post Was Warned by State," *Boston Globe*, 7 April 2007, accessed 11 April 2007, <[http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/04/07/doctor\\_who\\_quit\\_us\\_post\\_was\\_warned\\_by\\_state/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/04/07/doctor_who_quit_us_post_was_warned_by_state/)>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> “Classroom Presentations,” Healthy Futures, Inc., (2003-2007), accessed 14 March 2008, <<http://www.healthy-futures.org/classroom.htm>>.

<sup>12</sup> “Parent Programs,” Healthy Futures, Inc., (2003-2007), accessed 14 March 2008, <<http://www.healthy-futures.org/parent.htm>>.

<sup>13</sup> Connie Paige. “Lowell middle schools stick with teaching abstinence,” *Boston Herald*, (8 June 2008) accessed 18 October 2008, <[http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/06/08/lowell\\_middle\\_schools\\_stick\\_with\\_teaching\\_abstinence/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/06/08/lowell_middle_schools_stick_with_teaching_abstinence/)>.

<sup>14</sup> “Lowell Mission Church,” Lowell Mission Church, accessed 18 October 2008, <<http://lowellmissionchurch.org/tp15/intro.asp?id=101569>>.

<sup>15</sup> “Welcome,” Congregation Lion of Judah, accessed 18 October 2008, <<http://www.leondejuda.org/en/content>>.

<sup>16</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>17</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](#).