



MAINE

Maine received \$664,000 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2005.¹

Maine Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Maine's sexuality education law is one of the most comprehensive in the country; it mandates that the state "undertake initiatives to implement effective, comprehensive family life education services." 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.

"Comprehensive family life education" must be taught in kindergarten through twelfth 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, Title 22, Chapter 406, Sections 1902, 1910 and 1911.

Recent Legislation

"Abstinence Education" Could Be Offered in Place of or in Addition to Family Life Education
Senate Bill 605A, introduced in May 2005 and referred to the Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, would allow schools to offer "abstinence education" in seventh through twelfth grade in place of or in addition to comprehensive family life education. The bill uses the federal government's 8-point definition of "abstinence education." The Joint Committee determined that the bill "ought not to pass."

Legislation Would Require Written Permission for Students to Participate in Comprehensive Family Life Education

House Bill 1045, introduced in March 2005 and referred to the Joint Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, would require written permission from a parent or guardian before a student could participate in comprehensive family life education classes. The school administrator would also be required to tell parents and guardians whether “abstinence will be taught and whether homosexuality will be discussed.” This is referred to as an “opt-in” policy. The Joint Committee determined that the bill “ought not to pass” and the bill died.

Events of Note

*Maine Rejects Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funds
September 2005; Augusta, ME*

On September 20, 2005, Maine became the third state to reject Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding. With this action, Maine joins California and Pennsylvania in refusing to take ideologically biased federal abstinence-only-until-marriage funding.

Advocates of comprehensive strategies hailed this decision. Nicole Clegg, director of public affairs for the Family Planning Association of Maine stated, “we thank Maine’s Health and Human Services’ Public Health Department for having the courage to refuse these funds and putting the wellbeing of our young people ahead of a political agenda.”

In Fiscal Year 2004, Maine received \$172,468 in federal Title V funding and used it to run a media campaign titled *Parents Matter*, which focused on reaching parents through statistics, talking points, and multimedia resources.²

In rejecting Title V funding, Dr. Dora Anne Mills, the state’s public health director, stated that tighter federal control of the funding and its growing inconsistency with state law made it difficult for Maine to continue its more inclusive media campaign. The state had already decided that due to Maine law, which mandates a comprehensive approach to sexuality education, abstinence-only-until-marriage funding could not be used in schools. Dr. Mills worried that the increased stringency would cause Maine to violate its law mandating comprehensive sexuality education in schools. Dr. Mills also worried that this funding would not allow the state to help sexually active and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth.³

With this decision, Maine continues to show strong support for comprehensive sexuality education. Earlier in September 2005, the Maine Department of Education sent a letter to all school superintendents stating that abstinence-only-until-marriage programs do not fulfill the requirements of Maine law.⁴ At the time, Dr. Mills referred to abstinence-only-until-marriage funding as “ideological money” and stated, “studies show over and over again when youth are given full information, including abstinence, they make the healthiest choices possible.”⁵

Maine’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁶

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- In 2005, 46% of female high school students and 43% of male high school students in Maine reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 3% of female high school students and 6% of male high school students in Maine 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 2005, 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 12% of female high school students and 17% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 37% of female high school students and 30% 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 35% of female high school students and 33% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 55% of females and 64% of males in Maine reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 56% of females and 70% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 41% of females and 26% of males in Maine reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 15% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 21% of females and 32% of males in Maine reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2005, 91% of high school students in Maine reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, Maine's abortion rate was 15 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁷
- In 2002, Maine's birth rate was 25 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.⁸

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Maine would have been eligible for \$161,298 in Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2005; however the state does not apply for these funds due to the extraordinary restrictions 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.

However, Maine did use the remaining funding from Fiscal Year 2004 to run a media campaign titled *Parents Matter*. The campaign focused on reaching parents through statistics, talking points, and multimedia resources. The core of the campaign involved a website (www.parentsmatter.org), which was designed to help parents learn how to communicate better with their children about sex. The website stressed the “reality gap” between what parents think they know about their teen’s sexual activity and what teens are actually doing.⁹ The media campaign also used television commercials to reiterate the importance of ongoing, open, and honest conversations between teens and parents about sex. Unlike many Title V funded programs, *Parents Matter* hardly mentioned marriage. Instead of clearly defining abstinence-until-marriage as the socially accepted behavioral norm, the campaign focused more on simply asking teens to wait before becoming sexually active.¹⁰

Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE)¹¹ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There is one CBAE in Maine: Heritage of Maine. There is one AFLA grantee in Maine: People’s Regional Opportunity Program.

Heritage of Maine is the new name of the organization formerly known as Character Counts. According to its website, the organization teaches at several private schools in the state of Maine and one public school, Pownal Elementary School.¹²

Heritage of Maine’s programs show clear biases against abortion and several of the organization’s staff members are involved in anti-choice organizations, including Dick Trayner, former executive director of Maine Right to Life, now Heritage of Maine’s Development Director. In addition, the only link provided on the “Just for Teens” section of Heritage of Maine’s website is www.gravityteen.org. This website includes graphic pictures of aborted fetuses and highly biased quotes about abortion such as one from a “former abortion worker” who states, “I have been there and I have seen these totally formed babies as early as 10 weeks with the leg missing or their head cut off...I have seen the little rib cages.”¹³ The website also includes stories from “survivors of abortions that didn’t work.”¹⁴ Gravity Teen is supported by Vitae Caring Foundation, which explains its mission as: “to encourage a greater respect for human life and reduce the number of abortions by using mass media education for long term cultural change.”¹⁵

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2005

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, and AFLA)
Heritage of Maine 2004–2007 www.heritageofmaine.org	\$499,000	CBAE
People’s Regional Opportunity Program 2005–2006 www.propeople.org	\$165,000	AFLA

State Contact Information¹⁶

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 Teen and Young Adult Health Program
 Bureau of Health, Department of Human Services
 11 State House Station, Key Bank Plaza, 8th Floor
 Augusta, ME 04333
 Phone: (207) 287-5364

Maine Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

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

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

Planned Parenthood of Northern New
 England Action Fund
 183 Talcott Rd., Suite 101
 Williston, VT 05495
 Phone: (802) 878-7232
www.ppnneactionfund.org

Maine Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Christian Civic League of Maine

70 Sewall St.
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: (207) 622-7634
www.cclmaine.org

Newspapers in Maine

Bangor Daily News
Rick Levasseur
Health & Medicine Editor
PO Box 1329
Bangor, ME 04402
Phone: (207) 990-8123

Journal Tribune
Education Editor
457 Alfred Rd.
Biddeford, ME 04005
Phone: (207) 282-1535

The Portland Phoenix
Education Editor
16 York St.
Portland, ME 04101
Phone: (207) 773-8900

Portland Press Herald
John Porter
Editorial Page Editor
PO Box 1460
Portland, ME 04104
Phone: (207) 791-6480

Sun Journal
Lindsay Tice
Education Reporter
104 Park St.
Lewiston, ME 04240
Phone: (207) 784-5411

The Times Record
Education Editor
3 Business Pkwy.

Kennebec Journal
Keith Edwards
Education Reporter
274 Western Ave.
Augusta, ME 04330
Phone: (207) 621-5647

Morning Sentinel
Patricia Ammons
Medical/Health Editor
31 Front St.
Waterville, ME 04901
Phone: (207) 621-5645

Portland Press Herald
Josie Huang
Health & Medicine Reporter
390 Congress St.
Portland, ME 04101
Phone: (207) 791-6364

Portland Press Herald
Beth Quimby
Education Reporter
390 Congress St.
Portland, ME 04101
Phone: (207) 791-6300

Sun Journal
Christopher Williams
Medical/Health Reporter
104 Park St.
Lewiston, ME 04240
Phone: (207) 784-5411

The Weekly
Education Editor
491 Main St.

M A I N E

Brunswick, ME 04011
Phone: (207) 729-3311

Bangor, ME 04401
Phone: (207) 990-8139

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 2005 begins on October 1, 2004 and ends on September 30, 2005.

² *Commercials*, Parents Matter, 9 January 2005, accessed 10 April 2006, <<http://www.parentsmatter.org/commercials.html>>.

³ Paul Carrier, "Abstinence message too weak, official says," *Portland Press Herald* (ME), 3 October 2005, accessed 12 October 2005, <<http://pressherald.maintoday.com/news/state/051003abstinence.shtml>>.

⁴ Mark Peters, "Maine schools shun \$500,000 sex-ed course," *Portland Press Herald* (ME), 6 September 2005, accessed on Lexis Nexis, 10 April 2006.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Danice 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 8 June 2006, <<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>>.

⁷ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: Guttmacher Institute, February 2004), accessed 28 January 2005, <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/state_pregnancy_trends.pdf>.

⁸ *National Vital Statistics Reports 52.10* (Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2003), 48, accessed 4 February 2005, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm#stat%20tables>>.

⁹ *Home*, Parents Matter, accessed 9 January 2005, <<http://www.parentsmatter.org/mainefacts.html>>.

¹⁰ *Commercials*.

¹¹ In Fiscal Year 2004 SPRANS—CBAE was administered within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. In Fiscal Year 2005 this funding stream was moved to HHS' Administration for Children and Families and is now referred to simply as Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE).

¹² *Schedule of Events*, Heritage of Maine, accessed 13 April 2005, <http://www.heritageofmaine.org/index_files/Page580.htm>.

¹³ *Abortion Images*, Gravity Teens, accessed 13 April 2005,

<<http://www.gravityteen.com/pregnancy/images.cfm>>; *Pregnancy Information*, GravityTeens, accessed 13 April 2005, <<http://www.gravityteen.com/pregnancy/pregnancy.cfm>>.

¹⁴ *Alive & Kickin'* Gravity Teens, accessed 13 April 2005, <<http://www.gravityteen.com/pregnancy/kickin.cfm>>.

¹⁵ *Mission Statement*, Vitae Caring Foundation, accessed 13 April 2005, <<http://vitaecaringfoundation.org/>>.

¹⁶ There is no Title V Coordinator in Maine. The person listed coordinates school-based HIV/AIDS prevention and sexuality education.