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Missouri received \$5,052,443 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2005.¹

Missouri Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Missouri law does not mandate sexuality education; however, in order to be accredited, school districts must teach HIV/AIDS-prevention education in elementary and middle school.

All instruction in human sexuality must be medically and factually accurate. It must also:

[P]resent abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relation to all sexual activity for unmarried pupils because it is the only method that is one hundred percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases [STDs] and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity, and advise students that teenage sexual activity places them at a higher risk of dropping out of school because of the consequences of sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancy.

Instruction must also:

[P]resent students with the latest medically factual information regarding both the possible side effects and health benefits of all forms of contraception, including the success and failure rates for the prevention of pregnancy and STDs [and teach students not to make] unwanted physical and verbal sexual advances or otherwise exploit another person.

Although school districts are not required to follow it, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education produced the *Missouri Framework for Curriculum Development in Health Education and Physical Education*. This Framework includes instructional guidelines for HIV/AIDS- and STD-prevention education starting at the high school level. School boards must determine the specific content of sexuality education classes and make sure that it is age-appropriate.

The school district must also notify parents and guardians about:

- The basic content of the district's human sexuality instruction to be provided to the student; and
- The parent's right to remove the student from any part of the district's human sexuality instruction.

This is referred to as an "opt-out" policy.

See Missouri Revised Statute 170.015, Missouri's *HIV Prevention Education Program*, and *Missouri Framework for Curriculum Development in Health Education and Physical Education*.²

Recent Legislation

Bill Intended to Reduce the Number of Abortions

Senate Bill 943 and House Bill 1520 have as their purpose to reduce the number of abortions throughout the state. Among other initiatives, the legislation sets up a system for individuals who believe that their school district is not providing the required sexuality education. It allows them to complain to the state auditor and attorney general. The bills have several other sections, including ensuring access to emergency contraception for rape survivors and guaranteeing access to birth control. Both bills were introduced in January 2006; SB 943 was assigned to the Senate Committee on Judiciary, Civil, and Criminal Jurisprudence.

Bill Would Prohibit Any Provider of Abortion Services from Providing Sex Education

Introduced in January 2006, House Bill 1075 and Senate Bill 776 would prohibit any person or entity that is “a provider of abortion services” from providing, offering, sponsoring, or furnishing class materials or instruction on human sexuality. The bills provide an exemption, however, if the abortion is necessary to save the “life of the mother.” Parents must also be notified about the names and affiliations of all instructors. They would extend this legislation and existing regulations to apply to charter schools as well. It would remove the requirement for such information to be factually accurate.

Legislation Contains Numerous Anti-Choice Provisions, Including Prohibiting Certain People From Teaching Sex Education

Introduced in January 2005 and passed by the Senate, Senate Bill 2 would enact numerous anti-choice provisions. These provisions would establish the “Respect Life Commission,” prohibit public funding from going to any program or agency that “directly or indirectly subsidize abortion services,” and prevent minors from receiving an abortion without parental consent or a judicial bypass. In addition, SB 2 would prohibit any person who performs, induces, assists with, encourages, or refers people to abortion services from teaching sex education. The bill died at the end of the 2005 session.

Bill Would Prohibit Any Provider of Abortion Services from Providing Sex Education

Senate Bill 198, introduced in January 2005 and referred to the Committee on Judiciary, Civil, and Criminal Jurisprudence, would prohibit any person who performs, induces, assists with, encourages, or refers people to abortion services from teaching sex education. The bill provides an exemption, however, if the abortion is necessary to save the “life of the mother.” The bill died at the end of the 2005 session.

Events of Note

ACLU Sues Missouri High School for Censoring Gay Student November 2004; Webb City, MO

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit in federal court on November 23, 2004 against the Webb City School District in Missouri after the school sent a 16-year-old student home for wearing a shirt with a gay pride message. The lawsuit charged that the school violated the student's constitutional right to free expression.

The student's shirt represented the gay-straight alliance at his former high school in Fayetteville, AR. The front side of the shirt displayed the group's name. A pink triangle, two male symbols, two female symbols, a male and female symbol, and the slogan "Make a Difference!" all appeared on the back of the shirt. Though the student said he had worn the shirt several times before without incident, he was sent to the principal's office in October 2004 after his homeroom teacher noticed the shirt. The principal said the shirt was inappropriate and might offend other students. He instructed the student to turn the shirt inside out or go home and change. The student instead traded shirts with a friend, who wore the t-shirt the rest of the day without incident.

One week later, a similar incident occurred when the student wore a homemade t-shirt with a rainbow and the words: "I'm Gay and I'm Proud!" Within 10 minutes, the student said, he was approached by school officials and told he must turn his shirt inside out or leave. The student left school and was briefly suspended. The student returned to school several days later after promising not to wear gay-themed t-shirts until the issue had been resolved.

On advice from a teacher at his former school, the student contacted the ACLU. The group sent a letter to school officials in late October asking them to add a provision to the school district's policy that would clarify that students would not be punished for expressing their political views unless it would cause a disruption in the classroom. The superintendent said that he was not going to tell the school board to comply with the demands the ACLU put forth at that time explaining, "if disruption comes for whatever reason, you try to bridle that."³ He also pointed out that the school dress code includes a line that specifies clothes must not be "disruptive, distracting or inappropriate for the classroom."⁴

The student explained the lawsuit saying, "because I'm gay, my school is trying to take away my constitutional right as an American to express myself. ...The school lets other students wear anti-gay t-shirts, and I understand that they have a right to do that. I just want the same right."⁵

Missouri's Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁶

- In 2005, 47% of female high school students and 46% of male high school students in Missouri reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 4% of female high school students and 8% of male high school students in Missouri 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 17% of male high school students in Missouri 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, 35% of female high school students and 32% of male high school students in Missouri 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, 62% of females and 73% of males in Missouri 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, 24% of females and 12% of males in Missouri 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, 18% of females and 29% of males in Missouri 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, 90% of high school students in Missouri reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, Missouri's abortion rate was 14 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁷
- In 2002, Missouri's birth rate was 44 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

Missouri received \$885,593 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2005. 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. Missouri sub-grantees make up the state's required match through funding and in-kind services. The Missouri Department of Health oversees this funding.

There are 16 sub-grantees, including crisis pregnancy centers, churches, county health departments, school districts, and community centers. Each organization uses a variety of curricula including: *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted) Training*; *Choosing the Best LIFE*; *Choosing the Best PATH*; *Abstinence By Choice*; *Can We Talk*; *Removing the Risk*; *Sex Can Wait*; and *Making a Difference*. These programs target youth in grade school through high school.

SIECUS reviewed *WAIT Training* and found that it contained little medical or biological information and almost no information about STDs, including HIV/AIDS. Instead, it contains information and statistics about marriage, many of which are outdated and not supported by scientific research. It also contains messages of fear and shame and biased views on gender, sexual orientation, and family type. For example, *WAIT Training* explains that, “men sexually are like microwaves and women sexually are like crockpots....A woman is stimulated more by touch and romantic words. She is far more attracted by a man’s personality while a man is stimulated by sight. A man is usually less discriminating about those to whom he is physically attracted.”⁹

SIECUS also reviewed both *Choosing the Best LIFE* and *Choosing the Best PATH*, for more information, please see the Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) section.

The Laclede Pregnancy Support Center, a sub-grantee, offers counseling and educational programs in addition to pregnancy tests and referrals. However, the center provides inaccurate and biased information regarding abortion procedures. The language used to describe abortion procedures is laced with vocabulary that elicits fear and shame. For example, instead of referring to a “physician” “health care provider” or “doctor” the center refers to “the abortionist.” The center also promotes a strong abstinence-until-marriage message, referring to programs such as *WAIT Training*, *Choosing the Best PATH*, and *Choosing the Best LIFE*. It is unclear whether the center teaches any of these programs, or just promotes their use.

Title V Evaluation

Missouri evaluated its Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage program, *Life’s Walk*, during the 1999–2000 academic year. The evaluation involved pre- and post-test surveys and a small comparison group of students. No statistically significant differences were found between the comparison group and the students who participated in *Life’s Walk* with respect to reported sexual behavior.¹⁰ There was, however, a significant increase in sexual behavior between pre- to post-test among all students. The authors of the evaluation concluded that, “these results confirmed previous research that found no evidence that abstinence-only programs change adolescent sexual behavior.”¹¹

Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE)¹² and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There are seven CBAE grantees in Missouri: Better Family Life, Inc.; Catholic Charities of Kansas City/St. Joseph’s Children and Family Services (receives two grants); Future Leaders Outreach Network; Life Choices of Joplin; Saint Louis County Department of Health; Sparrow Community Development Group; and the Women’s Clinic of Kansas City/LifeGuard Youth Development. There are no AFLA grantees in Missouri.

The Women’s Clinic of Kansas City/LifeGuard Youth Development is a crisis pregnancy center that uses the *Choosing the Best* curricula. Visitors to its website are encouraged to view a “four-minute video we created in honor of Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, January 16, 2005.” The video shows scripture and then depicts the development of a fetus. Afterwards, the executive director of the center describes what the clinic needs, including volunteers to come in and pray at the “wailing wall,” a wall that separates the Women’s Clinic from the neighboring Planned Parenthood. The video shows young girls praying at this wall.¹³

Catholic Charities of Kansas City/St. Joseph’s Children and Family Services uses the *Choosing the Best LIFE* curriculum for high school students and the *Choosing the Best PATH* curriculum for middle school students.

SIECUS reviewed *Choosing the Best LIFE* and found that it names numerous physical and psychological consequences of premarital sexual activity, suggests that sexually active teens will never have happy futures, and implies that only teens with low self-esteem and poor judgment become sexually active. For example, *Choosing the Best LIFE* states that, “relationships often lower the self-respect of both partners—one feeling used, the other feeling like the user. Emotional pain can cause a downward spiral leading to intense feelings of lack of worthlessness.”¹⁴

SIECUS reviewed *Choosing the Best PATH* and found that it provides endless information on the negative consequences of premarital sexual activity and utilizes a variety of tactics to suggest that teens should feel guilty, embarrassed, and ashamed of sexual behavior. For example, *Choosing the Best PATH* asks students: “How does being sexually active as a teen affect how a person feels about himself or herself?” The suggested answer is: “Can feel sad about losing virginity, loss of self-respect, blames self for getting pregnant or contracting an STD.” It goes on to say, “sexual activity also can lead to the trashing of a person’s reputation, resulting in the loss of friends.”¹⁵

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

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Program Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Missouri Department of Health www.health.state.mo.us	\$885,593 federal	Title V
Carr Square Tenant Management Corporation	\$102,719.75	Title V sub-grantee
Cass County CHART	\$81,000	Title V sub-grantee
Clay County Public Health Center www.clayhealth.com	\$81,264.40	Title V sub-grantee

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Program Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
Dent County Health Center	\$9,229	Title V sub-grantee
Jennings School District www.jenningsk12.net	\$41,345.75	Title V sub-grantee
Kansas City, MO School District www.kcmsd.k12.mo.us	\$118,799	Title V sub-grantee
Laclede Pregnancy Support Center	\$64,430	Title V sub-grantee
Life Choices of Joplin	\$69,124	Title V sub-grantee
DUAL GRANTEE 2003–2006	\$800,000	CBAE
Lutheran Family and Children’s Services www.lfcsmo.org	\$59,400	Title V sub-grantee
Northside Community Center	\$27,864	Title V sub-grantee
People’s Health Centers www.phcenters.org	\$109,377	Title V sub-grantee

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Program Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
St. Louis Connect Care	\$98,297	Title V sub-grantee
St. Louis County Department of Health DUAL GRANTEE 2005-2008	\$91,715 \$424,279	Title V sub-grantee CBAE
The Women’s Clinic of Kansas City/LifeGuard Youth Development DUAL GRANTEE 2005–2008	\$114,276 \$746,823	Title V sub-grantee CBAE
Thomas Business Enterprises, Inc.	\$65,420	Title V sub-grantee
Youth Life–Taney County	\$138,091	Title V sub-grantee
Better Family Life, Inc 2005–2008	\$799,500	CBAE
Catholic Charities of Kansas City/ St. Joseph Children and Family Services 2002–2005 DUAL GRANTEE 2005–2008 www.catholiccharities-kcsj.org	\$133,992 \$315,482	CBAE CBAE

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Program Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
Future Leaders Outreach Network 2004–2007	\$711,604	CBAE
Sparrow Community Development Group 2004–2007	\$235,170	CBAE

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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Missouri Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

American Civil Liberties Union of Eastern Missouri
 4557 Laclede Ave.
 St. Louis, MO 63108
 Phone: (314) 361-2111
www.aclu-em.org

American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas and Western Missouri
 3601 Main St.
 Kansas City, MO 64111
 Phone: (816) 756-3113
www.aclukswmo.org

American Civil Liberties Union of the Ozarks
 3601 Main St.
 Kansas City, MO 64111
 Phone: (816) 756-3113
www.acluzarks.org

Lesbian and Gay Community Center
 207 Westport Rd., Suite 210-218
 Kansas City, MO 64111
 Phone: (816) 931-4420
www.lgcc-kc.org

Missouri Alliance for Choice
 1010 Vine St.
 Fulton, MO 65251
 Phone: (573) 445-8075

Missouri Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice
 5000 Washington Pl.
 St. Louis, MO 63108
 Phone: (314) 361-9600
www.morcrc.org

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NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri
4144 Lindell, Suite 505
St. Louis, MO 63108
Phone: (314) 531-8616
www.monaral.org

Planned Parenthood Advocates Kansas and
Mid-Missouri
4401 West 109th St., Suite 200
Overland Park, KS 66211
Phone: (913) 312-5100
www.ppkm.org

Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis
Region Advocates
4251 Forest Park Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63108
Phone: (314) 531-7526
www.ppslr.org

PROMO: for the Personal Rights of
Missourians
438 N. Skinker Blvd.
Saint Louis, MO 63130
Phone: (314) 862-4900
www.promoonline.org

Missouri Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Eagle Forum Education Center
PO Box 618
Alton, MO 62002
Phone: (618) 462-5415
www.eagleforum.org

Life's Silver Lining
PO Box 971
Florissant, MO 63032
Phone: (314) 921-7762
www.lifessilverlinings.com

Missouri Right to Life
621 East McCarty, Suite A
PO Box 651
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Phone: (573) 635-5110
www.missourilife.org

The Women's Clinic of Kansas City
815 N. Noland Rd., Suite 4&5
Independence, MO 64050
Phone: (816) 836-9000
www.thewomensclinic.net

Newspapers in Missouri

The Branson Tri-Lakes Daily News
Chris Wolf
Community News Reporter
200 Industrial Park Dr.
Hollister, MO 65672
Phone: (417) 334-3161

Columbia Daily Tribune
Megan Means
Education Reporter
101 N. 4th St.
Columbia, MO 65201
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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 *HIV Prevention Education Program* (Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 23 July 2002), accessed 28 January 2005, <<http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divimprove/curriculum/hiveducation/msipeducation.html>>.

³ Steve Rock, "Student's T-Shirts Kindle Gay Rights Conflict," *The Kansas City Star*, 5 November 2004, accessed on Lexis-Nexis, 8 January 2005.

⁴ Ibid.

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 *WAIT Training-Workshop Manual* (Longmont, CO: Friends First, 1996). For more information see, *Toward a Sexually Healthy America, Abstinence-only-until-marriage programs that Try to Keep Our Youth Scared Chaste* at <http://www.siecus.org/pubs/tsha_scaredchaste.pdf>.

¹⁰ Jerrold Barnett and Cynthia Hurst, "Abstinence education for rural youth: an evaluation of the *Life's Walk* program," *Journal of School Health* 73.3, (September 2003): 264-268.

¹¹ Ibid., 267.

¹² 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).

¹³ *TWC – View Our Video*, The Women's Clinic of Kansas City (2005), accessed 12 January 2006, <<http://www.thewomensclinic.net/video.htm>>.

¹⁴ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best LIFE* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *Choosing the Best LIFE* at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.htm>.

¹⁵ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best PATH* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *Choosing the Best PATH* at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.html>.