



NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina received \$1,670,213 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2006.¹

North Carolina Sexuality Education Law and Policy

North Carolina schools are required to teach a comprehensive health education program, which includes prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and “abstinence until marriage education.” Schools must stress the importance of parental involvement and abstinence from sex until marriage in disease prevention. Students must also be taught refusal skills and strategies to handle peer pressure. Curricula must teach that a “mutually faithful monogamous heterosexual relationship in the context of marriage is the best lifelong means of avoiding diseases transmitted by sexual contact,” including HIV/AIDS. With respect to contraception and family planning, the law states:

Students may receive information about where to obtain contraceptives and abortion referral services only in accordance with a local board’s policy regarding parental consent. Any instruction concerning the use of contraceptives or prophylactics shall provide accurate statistical information on their effectiveness and failure rates for preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, in actual use among adolescent populations and shall explain clearly the difference between risk reduction and risk elimination through abstinence. The Department of Health and Human Services shall provide the most current available information at the beginning of each school year.

Furthermore, in North Carolina contraceptives cannot be made available or distributed on school property.

The North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction provides several different resources for schools, including *Components of a Strong School HIV Policy*, *Healthful Living Education*, and *Communicable Diseases—Students*, as well as online information about abstinence-only-until-marriage. These documents offer model policies, suggested curricula, and content outlines. However, school districts make the ultimate decision about what the education looks like in the classroom. School districts may provide a more comprehensive program only if a public hearing is held. Each school district must also establish a school health advisory council.

According to North Carolina law, “local boards of education shall adopt policies to provide opportunities either for parents and legal guardians to consent or for parents and legal guardians to withhold their consent to the students’ participation in any or all of these programs.” These are referred to as “opt-in” and “opt-out” policies, respectively.

See North Carolina General Statute 115C-81, *Components of a Strong School HIV Policy, Healthy Living Education, Communicable Diseases- Students*, and www.nchealthyschools.org/abstinence.

Recent Legislation

Legislation Modifies School Health Education Program

House Bill 879 and Senate Bill 1182, introduced in March 2007, would modify the existing law which requires schools to teach “abstinence-until-marriage education” to include information about both abstinence and contraception. Under this new legislation, schools would provide education on mental and emotional health, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, nutrition, dental health, environmental health, family living, consumer health, disease control, growth and development, first aid and emergency care, preventing unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, abstinence-based comprehensive sexual health, bicycle safety, awareness of sexual abuse/assault, and risk reduction. All instructional materials would have to be age- and culture-appropriate, factually and medically accurate, and taught in grades seven through twelve. HB 879 was recently referred to the House Committees on Health and Education, while SB 1182 was referred to the Senate Committees on Education and Public Instruction.

Bill Grants Funding to Family Life Council of Greater Greensboro

House Bill 1884, introduced in May 2006 and referred to the House Committee on Appropriations, would appropriate \$100,000 for the Family Life Council of Greater Greensboro to implement a male responsibility teen pregnancy-prevention program.

Bills Appropriate Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Funds

House Bill 2747 and Senate Bill 1987 would allocate \$200,000 for the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina. Both bills were introduced in May 2006 and currently sit in their respective Committee on Appropriations.

Senate Bill 1516 also allocates funds for the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina, but in the amount of \$150,000. S.B. 1516 was introduced in May 2006 and referred to the Senate Committee on Appropriations/Base Budget.

Events of Note

Wake County, North Carolina Flip-Flops on Sexuality Education 2002–2004; Wake County, NC

Parents, educators, advocates, and students have been debating sexuality education in Wake County, North Carolina for many years since the county changed the focus of its curriculum from comprehensive sexuality education to abstinence-only-until-marriage in 1995.

In 2002, the Wake County School Health Advisory Council recommended re-instituting a comprehensive sexuality education program. After months of debate, the Wake County School Board agreed in a 5–4 decision. Over the months that followed, educators and advocates worked to create a new curriculum that included information about contraceptives, STDs, and tolerance for people of all sexual orientations.²

The debate did not end there, however. Critics of the curriculum who felt that the school should have maintained an abstinence-only-until-marriage focus continued to demand changes. In January 2004, the Wake County School Board voted 5–3 in favor of a new restrictive abstinence-only policy that negated much of the previously implemented comprehensive sexuality education curriculum.

The new policy requires all school employees to promote the message that, “abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage is the expected standard for all school-age children.”³ However, a

portion of the proposed policy that would have required all school employees to teach about abstinence whenever sexual subjects were discussed was removed and the policy, as adopted, only applies to health classes.

The adopted policy requires that all sexuality education classes in grades K-12 teach that abstinence-until-marriage is the expected standard and that a “mutually faithful monogamous heterosexual relationship in the context of marriage” is the best way to prevent STDs, including HIV/AIDS. The adoption of this policy eliminated many of the added comprehensive components, including information on using contraceptives and the importance of tolerance for all sexual orientations. Under the new policy, discussions on contraception must focus on failure rates, and teachers are not allowed to answer students’ questions about where and how they can obtain contraception or seek abortions. In addition, all discussions of sexual orientation and tolerance will now be made part of character education classes.

A board member who supported the restrictions explained, “This is simply saying that when we teach kids about sex, we are going to send a clear message that abstinence is their best choice for success.” He continued by saying that “having sex out of wedlock, the emotional consequences of that decision are huge.”⁴

Many people at the January 2004 meeting, however, spoke out against the new policy. A college student whose teenage friend had recently given birth said that abstinence is not enough. “Thousands of parents talk to their students about sex, thousands don’t, and those girls will be left crying not knowing what to do,” the student said.⁵ The executive director of Equality NC, a critic of the new policy, said, “We’ve got a conservative majority on the board who doesn’t want anything other than abstinence taught.”⁶ Even some school employees criticized the new policy; one teacher in the area said, “I hope at one point we can expand what we teach. We have ninth graders who come in pregnant. We have ninth-grade fathers.”⁷

*Children’s Book About Two Gay Princes Causes Uproar Among Parents
March 2004; Wilmington, NC*

The parents of a first-grader at Freeman Elementary School in Wilmington, NC, filed a complaint with the school after reading a book that their seven-year-old daughter had brought home from the school library. The book, titled *King and King*, tells the story of a character named Prince Bertie who falls in love with a character named Prince Lee. The book is written by two Dutch authors and the publisher says it is intended for ages six and up. The book ends with the two princes falling in love and kissing, their lips obscured by a picture of a heart.

The father said his daughter was “not old enough to understand something like that, especially when it is not in our beliefs.”⁸ The father also said he felt that “if this book is going to be allowed, I believe it ought to be allowed on more of a high school level.”⁹ The school principal countered by saying, “We have a lot of diversity in our schools....What might be inappropriate for one family, in another family is a totally acceptable thing.”¹⁰

Due to the family’s complaint and a second complaint filed by another family, a school committee, made up of parents, teachers, and community members, held a meeting in late March 2004 about the book. The school committee voted 8–3 to put the book under lock and key so that only adults, including parents and teachers, are allowed to check it out.

The parents who filed the original complaint said they were happy with the decision, but not everyone agreed with the ruling. One committee member said, “I feel like it’s my responsibility to make it clear that these things exist. It doesn’t mean we have to agree with it. It’s not about right or wrong...It’s just different.”¹¹

As a result of the widespread media attention this controversy received, people from around the country donated additional copies of the book to the school. In fact, the attention has prompted a second printing of the book and a sequel is expected.

North Carolina's Youth: Statistical Information of Note¹²

- In 2005, 48% of female high school students and 54% of male high school students in North Carolina reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2005, 5% of female high school students and 11% of male high school students in North Carolina 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, 14% of female high school students and 21% of male high school students in North Carolina 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 39% of male high school students in North Carolina 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 71% of males in North Carolina 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, 17% of females and 18% of males in North Carolina 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, 20% of females and 28% of males in North Carolina reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2000, North Carolina's abortion rate was 22 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.¹³
- In 2004, North Carolina's birth rate was 49 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 41 per 1,000 nationwide.¹⁴

Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina

- In 2005, 46% of female high school students and 56% of male high school students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.

- In 2005, 5% of female high school students and 16% of male high school students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina 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, 14% of female high school students and 25% of male high school students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina 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, 34% of female high school students and 40% of male high school students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina 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 76% of males in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina 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, 16% of females and 10% of males in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina 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, 15% of females and 23% of males in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 28% of males nationwide.

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

North Carolina received \$1,248,963 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2006. 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. North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction receives the funds and uses teachers' salaries as in-kind contributions to meet the required match. The Department of Public Instruction keeps 10 percent of the funds for administration; the remaining funds are given to 101 school districts and 14 charter schools throughout the state. In order to be eligible, schools must have at least one class of seventh through twelfth graders. According to the North Carolina Healthy Schools website, "school systems that accept these funds must comply with the federal A-H Criteria for abstinence education."¹⁵

Funding is distributed based on the number of grades and students each school has; schools receive \$333 per grade and \$1.31 per student in grades seven through twelve. Schools are free to use the money at their discretion as long as they do not violate the federal government's eight-point definition of "abstinence education." Staff at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction visit school sites on an as-needed basis for general monitoring.

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

There is one CBAE grantee in North Carolina: Rockingham Pregnancy Care Center. There are two AFLA grantees in North Carolina: Public Health Authority of Cabarrus County and Roanoke Chapel Baptist Church.

The Rockingham Pregnancy Center is a crisis pregnancy center. Crisis pregnancy centers typically advertise as providing medical services and then use anti-choice propaganda, misinformation, and fear and shame tactics to dissuade women facing unintended pregnancy from exercising their right to choose. According the Human Services Directory of Rockingham County, North Carolina, Rockingham Pregnancy Center’s purpose is “to befriend, comfort, educate, and support individuals and their families facing an unplanned pregnancy in a confidential and supportive Christian environment.”¹⁶

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2006

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services www.dhhs.state.nc.us	\$1,248,963 federal	Title V
Rockingham Pregnancy Care Center 2003–2006	\$46,250	CBAE
Public Health Authority of Cabarrus County 2002–2007 www.cabarrushealth.org	\$150,000	AFLA
Roanoke Chapel Baptist Church 2002–2007	\$225,000	AFLA

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Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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North Carolina Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Equality North Carolina
P.O. Box 28768
Raleigh, NC 27611
Phone: (919) 829-0343
www.equalitync.org

NARAL Pro-Choice North Carolina
514 Daniels St., #142
Raleigh, NC 27605
Phone: (919) 829-9779
www.prochoicenorthcarolina.org

North Carolina Lambda Youth Network
115 Market St., Suite 203
Durham, NC 27701
Phone: (919) 683-3037
www.nclyn.org

Planned Parenthood of Central North Carolina
1765 Dobbins Dr.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
Phone: (919) 929-5402
www.plannedparenthood.org/centralnc/

North Carolina Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Christian Action League of North Carolina
809 Spring Forest Rd., Suite 1000
Raleigh, NC 27609
Phone: (919) 787-0606
www.christianactionleague.org

John Locke Foundation
200 West Morgan St., Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27601
Phone: (919) 828-3876
www.johnlocke.org

North Carolina Family Policy Council
P.O. Box 20607
Raleigh, NC 27619
Phone: (919) 807-0800
www.ncfpc.org

North Carolina Right to Life
P.O. Box 9282
Greensboro, NC 27429
Phone: (336) 274-LIFE
www.ncrtl.org

Newspapers in North Carolina

The Charlotte Observer
Ann Helms
Education Reporter
P.O. Box 30308
Charlotte, NC 28230
Phone: (704) 358-5033

The Fayetteville Observer
Andrew Martel
K-12 Education Reporter
458 Whitfield St.
Fayetteville, NC 28306
Phone: (910) 486-3500

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The Independent

Richard Hart
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P.O. Box 2690
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Phone: (919) 286-1972

The News & Observer

Roger Vander Horst
Education Reporter
P.O. Box 191
Raleigh, NC 27602
Phone: (919) 829-4558

News & Record

Morgan Josey
Education Reporter
200 E. Market St.
Greensboro, NC 27401
Phone: (336) 373-7000

Winston-Salem Journal

Danielle Deaver
Education Reporter
418 N. Marshall St.
Winston-Salem, NC 27101
Phone: (336) 727-7279

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 2006 begins on October 1, 2005 and ends on September 30, 2006.

² *February 2003 Controversy Report* (Washington, DC: SIECUS, February 2003), accessed 28 January 2005, <<http://www.siecus.org/controversy/cont0018.html>>.

³ "Healthful Living Education Policy Updated," Wake County Public School System, accessed 15 March 2004, <<http://www.wcpss.net/news/health-ed-update/>>.

⁴ "Wake School Board Approves Abstinence-Based Sex Education Policy at All Grades," *WRAL.com*, 6 January 2004, accessed 30 March 2005 <<http://www.wral.com/family/2746095/detail.html>>.

⁵ Vanessa Welch, "Wake School Board Removes Contraceptives, Tolerance from Sex-Ed Curriculum," *Eyewitness News 11.com*, 6 January 2004.

⁶ T. Keung Hui, "Sex Ed May Be Revised Today," *News and Observer*, 6 January 2004.

⁷ M. Futch, "Is Abstinence Enough?," *Fayetteville Online*, 21 January 2004.

⁸ S. Scott, "Book from School Jolts Parents," *The Star News*, 18 March 2004.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ S. Jones, "King Dethroned, Pulled From Shelf," *Star News*, 27 March 2004.

¹² 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 26 January 2007, <<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>>.

¹³ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: The Guttmacher Institute, February 2004), accessed 26 January 2007, <<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/2006/09/12/USTPstats.pdf>>.

¹⁴ *National Vital Statistics Reports 55.01* (Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2006), 10, accessed 26 January 2006, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr55/nvsr55_01.pdf>.

¹⁵ "Abstinence," North Carolina Healthy Schools, accessed 22 January 2007, <<http://www.nchealthyschools.org/abstinence>>.

¹⁶ "Rockingham Pregnancy Care Center," Human Services Directory, Rockingham County, N.C., Rockingham County Government, accessed 2 February 2007,

<<http://www.co.rockingham.nc.us/hsdirect/alphalist.htm#ROCKINGHAM%20PREGNANCY%20CARE%20CENTER>>.