



SIECUS

State Profile

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The Department of Public Instruction and community-based organizations in North Carolina received \$2,223,963 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2007.¹

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.nhealthyschools.org/abstinence.

Recent Legislation

Legislation to Amend Nondiscrimination Laws

House Bill 1789, introduced in April 2007, would have amended the State Personal Act so that the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions extended to cover sexual orientation. The bill was sent to the House Committee on State Personnel on April 19, 2007 but failed to move forward and died.

Legislation to Modify School Health Education Program

House Bill 879 and Senate Bill 1182, introduced in March 2007, would have modified the existing law to require schools to teach “abstinence-until-marriage education” to include information about both abstinence and contraception. Under this new legislation, schools would have provided 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 been required to be age- and culture-appropriate, factually and medically accurate, and taught in grades seven through twelve. In March 2007, HB 879 was referred to the House Committees on Health and Education, while SB 1182 was referred to the Senate Committees on Education and Public Instruction. Both bills failed to leave committee and died.

Events of Note

Student-Created Education Program Dismissed by Superintendent May 2007; Macon County, NC

A group of students at Franklin High School in Macon County, North Carolina assessed the results of the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System; a survey of a wide variety of behaviors conducted biennially by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and decided that sexual activity was the most troubling issue among their peers. The students pointed to the sizeable number of girls in their high school who were pregnant, and determined that while illicit drug use (including alcohol) is routinely addressed in schools, sexual activity remains taboo and shrouded in myths and misinformation.

The students, with help from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, the Macon County Health Department, SIECUS, and others, developed a new peer-education program entitled “Sexy Abs—Sense Enough to Expand Your Awareness About Sex.” “Sexy Abs” was designed to be a “peer talk program,” which would be presented to area middle-school students by trained high school students.²

The students presented an outline of the program to the school board in April 2007 and board members were supportive. Though he had initially also been supportive, the superintendent rejected the program without any board input saying, “There would be no kids teaching kids about sex.”³

Still the students were successful in making the school board aware of the need for more sexuality education. One school board member “expressed disappointment” when she learned that the issue would not go forward. “I think they would have done a fine job,” she said. “We need to have people stand up and say this is something that is needed.” Another board member also felt let down, “We got an email with the rough draft...with a few changes, I would have no problem with it.” Many other members of the board also felt that the topic was prematurely pulled from discussion.⁴

Gay-Straight Alliance Allowed, But More Restrictions on All School Clubs
 November 2006; Currituck County, NC

In September 2006, an openly gay student approached school administrators requesting to form a new Gay-Straight Alliance on campus. The student said she hoped the club would foster a more tolerant environment and end the discrimination she faces in school.

Though many community members wanted the school to ban the club outright, district officials realized that the legal precedents were against them. One school board member researched past litigation surrounding GSA controversies and reported that there was no legal way to skirt the issue.⁵ Judges across the country have ruled that Equal Access Act of 1984, which states that school districts cannot restrict extracurricular clubs on the basis of “religious, political, philosophical or other content,” protects GSAs. If a school district allows any clubs to form, it must all allow GSAs to form.⁶

The school board did, however, vote in new rules for all non-academic clubs. The new guidelines state that non-academic clubs are not allowed to use the public address system, can only post announcements in designated areas, and will not be pictured in the yearbook. Furthermore, students now need written permission from their parent to join any student-initiated non-curricular club.⁷ Though these rules seemed designed to make it more difficult for the GSA to function, they appear to be legally permissible as long as they are applied equally to all non-academic clubs.

North Carolina’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁸

- In 2007, 50% 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 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 4% of female high school students and 12% 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 10% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 14% of female high school students and 18% 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 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 39% of female high school students and 36% 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 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, 57% of females and 67% of males in North Carolina 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, 21% of females and 14% of males in North Carolina reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 13% of males nationwide.

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- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 17% of females and 24% of males in North Carolina reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 18% of females and 28% of males nationwide.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina

- In 2007, 44% of female high school students and 51% 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 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 4% of female high school students and 14% 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 10% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 13% of female high school students and 18% 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 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 31% of female high school students and 34% 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 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 74% of males in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina 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, 17% of females and 9% of males in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina 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, 12% of females and 19% of males in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 18% of females and 28% of males nationwide.

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction received \$1,248,963 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2007. 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 115 school districts and 14 charter schools throughout the state. In order to be eligible, schools must have at least one class of seventh

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through twelfth grade students. 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.”⁹

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: Halifax County School. There are two AFLA grantees in North Carolina: Public Health Authority of Cabarrus County and Roanoke Chapel Baptist Church.

The Public Health Authority of Cabarrus County uses its AFLA grant to conduct the “Taking Responsible Actions in Life (TRAIL)” program with students in seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. TRAIL participants “engage in abstinence education and enrichment activities over a three-year period.”¹⁰ This project focuses on “impacting school-wide social norms towards positive decision-making” and uses a saturation model by conducting a social norms marketing campaign at the school aimed at students, parents, and teachers. Parents with students in the program participate in parent-child homework activities, newsletters, and family events at the school.¹¹

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2007

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 Public Instruction www.dhhs.state.nc.us	\$1,248,963 federal	Title V
Halifax County School 2007–2011 www.halifax.k12.nc.us/home.aspx	\$600,000	CBAE
Public Health Authority of Cabarrus County 2002–2007 www.cabarrushealth.org	\$150,000	AFLA

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)
Roanoke Chapel Baptist Church 2002–2007	\$225,000	AFLA

Adolescent Health Contact¹²

Denise Pattillo
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 Department of Public Instruction
 301 North Wilmington St.
 Raleigh, NC 27601
 Phone: (919) 807-3860

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

ACLU of North Carolina
 P.O. Box 28004
 Raleigh, NC 27611
 Phone: (919) 834-3390
www.acluofnorthcarolina.org

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 Carolina¹³

The Charlotte Observer
Newsroom
600 S. Tryon St.
Charlotte NC 28202
Phone: 704-358-5000
www.charlotte.com

The Fayetteville Observer
Newsroom
P.O. Box 849
Fayetteville, NC 28302
Phone: (910) 323-4848
www.fayobserver.com

The Independent
Newsroom
P.O. Box 2690
Durham, NC 27715
Phone: (919) 286-1972
www.indyweek.com

The News & Observer
Newsroom
P.O. Box 191
Raleigh, NC 27602
Phone: (919) 829-4500
www.newsobserver.com

News & Record
Newsroom
P.O. Box 20848
Greensboro, NC 27420
Phone: (336) 373-7000
www.news-record.com

Winston-Salem Journal
Newsroom
P.O. Box 3159
Winston-Salem, NC 27102
Phone: (336) 727-7211
www.journalnow.com

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 2007 begins on October 1, 2006 and ends on September 30, 2007.

² Beth Seay, "‘Sexy Abs’ Shot Down By Superintendent Brigman," *The Macon County News & Shopping Guide*, 03 May 2007, accessed 22 May 2007, <http://maconnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=659&Itemid=34>.

³ Ibid

⁴ Beth Seay, "Health Advisory Committee Supports Expanding Sex Ed," *The Macon County News & Shopping Guide*, 24 May 2007, accessed 29 May 2007 <http://www.maconnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=766&Itemid=3>.

⁵ Kristin Davis, "Currituck County Students Can Have Gay-Straight Club," *The Virginia Pilot*, 7 November 2006, accessed 13 November 2006, <<http://content.hamptonroads.com/story.cfm?story=113936&ran=185941>>.

⁶ *The Equal Access Act and "Gay Straight Alliance" Groups*, (Minneapolis, MN: Outfront Minnesota), accessed 15 November 2006, <www.outfront.org/library/access.html>.

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⁷ Davis, "Currituck County Students Can Have Gay-Straight Club."

⁸ 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>.

⁹ "Abstinence," North Carolina Healthy Schools, accessed 22 January 2007, <<http://www.nchealthyschools.org/abstinence>>.

¹⁰ Office of Population Affairs, Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs, "Adolescent Family Life (AFL) Prevention Demonstration Projects 2007-2008."

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

¹³ This section is a list of major newspapers in your state with contact information for their newsrooms. This list is by no means inclusive 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](#).