



SIECUS

State Profile

NORTH CAROLINA

The Department of Public Instruction and community-based organizations in North Carolina received \$2,348,973 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2008

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 to Provide Grant Funding to the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina

Senate Bill 1670 and House Bill 2303, introduced in May 2008, would have appropriated \$75,000 of state funds to the department of health and human services to be granted to the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina during the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year. The funds would have been matched by private donations to allow the Coalition to “continue to work with and provide technical support to groups, communities, professionals, and individuals in organizing and implementing programs to prevent adolescent pregnancies.” The Senate bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Appropriations and Base Budget and the House Bill was referred to the House Committee on Appropriations. Both bills died in committee.

Legislation to Amend Nondiscrimination Laws

House Bill 1789, introduced in April 2007, would have amended the State Personnel 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 comprehensive sexuality education including 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 7-12. 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.

North Carolina’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- 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.

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- 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.
- 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 \$1,236,473 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.
- 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 190 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) throughout the state. In order to be eligible, schools must have at least one class of seventh through 12th 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."³ 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 7–12. 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.

The state also runs a media campaign titled, "Not my Kids... Are you Sure" in collaboration with the state parent teacher association.⁴ "The goal of the media campaign is to encourage parent/guardian communication with their student. The Media Campaign centers on risky behaviors in the areas of sexual decision-making, alcohol and substance abuse, and self-mutilation."⁵

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

- There are two CBAE grantees in North Carolina: Family Resource Center of Raleigh, Inc. and Halifax County School.
- There are no AFLA grantees in North Carolina.

SIECUS has compiled some examples of the use of CBAE and AFLA funding in North Carolina:

Halifax County School, \$600,000 (CBAE 2007–2012)

The Halifax County School's abstinence-only-until-marriage program is titled "Project ASPIRE (Abstinence Standards Promote Individual Respect and Education)" and uses the *Choosing the Best* series.⁶ The *Choosing the Best* series is one of the more popular abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in the country. The series is comprised of a number of curricula for students from sixth grade through high school: *Choosing the Best WAY*, *Choosing the Best PATH*, *Choosing the Best LIFE*, *Choosing the Best JOURNEY*, and *Choosing the Best SOULMATE*. The series has been recently revised and the information about STDs is now medically accurate. However, *Choosing the Best* curricula continue to promote heterosexual marriage, rely on messages of fear and shame, and include biases about gender, sexual orientation, and pregnancy options. For example, *Choosing the Best PATH* asks students to brainstorm the "emotional consequences" of premarital sex. Suggested answers include "guilt, feeling scared, ruined relationships, broken emotional bonds."⁷

In addition to using *Choosing the Best*, the Halifax County School offers workshops as the Guilford County Marriage Resource Center.⁸ The purpose of these workshops is to help families develop healthy relationships and prepare for and strengthen marriages.

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In its application to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for the CBAE funding, the Halifax County School uses Wikipedia as a reference for its statistical information.⁹ Wikipedia is edited by thousands of users and not a credible source of statistical information.¹⁰

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2008

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	\$1,236,473 federal	Title V
Family Resource Center of Raleigh, Inc. 2008–2013 www.frcofraleigh.org/	\$512,500	CBAE
Halifax County School 2007–2012 www.halifax.k12.nc.us/home.aspx	\$600,000	CBAE

Adolescent Health Contact¹¹

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 Department of Public Instruction
 301 North Wilmington Street
 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 Street, #142
 Raleigh, NC 27605
 Phone: (919) 829-9779
www.prochoicenorthcarolina.org

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

Planned Parenthood of Central North
Carolina
1765 Dobbins Drive
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 Road, Suite 1000
Raleigh, NC 27609
Phone: (919) 787-0606
www.christianactionleague.org

John Locke Foundation
200 West Morgan Street, 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 Carolina¹²

The Charlotte Observer
Newsroom
600 S. Tryon Street
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

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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 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

² 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>>.

³ "Abstinence," North Carolina Healthy Schools, accessed 22 September 2008, <<http://www.nhealthyschools.org/abstinence>>.

⁴ "Parent Resources," North Carolina Healthy Schools, accessed 11 October 2008, <<http://www.nhealthyschools.org/parent/>>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Halifax County School, Application to the ACF, 2007, p. 3.

⁷ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best, Inc., 2001–2007).

⁸ Halifax County School, ACF Application, 2007, p. 11.

⁹ Halifax County Schools, Application to the ACF, 2007, pp. 5, 49, 58.

¹⁰ "About Wikipedia," Wikipedia, accessed 15 October 2008, <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:About>>.

¹¹ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

¹² 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](#).