



OKLAHOMA

The Department of Health and community-based organizations in Oklahoma received \$1,289,869 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2008.¹

Oklahoma Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Oklahoma does not require schools to teach sexuality education. However, the state's departments of education and health must develop curricula and materials and keep them current. If a school district chooses to teach sexuality education, all curricula and materials must be approved for medical accuracy by the state and by the district superintendent. All materials must also be available to parents for review. In addition, all sexuality education classes must have as one of their primary purposes "the teaching of or informing students about the practice of abstinence."

Schools are required to provide HIV/AIDS-prevention education. This education must be limited to the "discussion of the disease AIDS and its spread and prevention." The class must be taught once during either grade five or six, once during grades seven through nine, and once during grades ten through 12. All curricula and materials must be checked for medical accuracy by the Oklahoma Department of Health and must only include "factual medical information for AIDS prevention." HIV/AIDS education must specifically teach that:

- engaging in homosexual activity, promiscuous sexual activity, intravenous drug use or contact with contaminated blood products is now known to be primarily responsible for contact with the AIDS virus;
- avoiding the activities specified above is the only method of preventing the spread of the virus;
- artificial means of birth control are not a certain means of preventing the spread of the AIDS virus and reliance on such methods puts a person at risk for exposure to the disease; and
- sexual intercourse, with or without condoms, with any person testing positive for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) antibodies, or any other person infected with HIV, places that individual in a high risk category for developing AIDS.

In addition, the *Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) Integrated Curriculum: Health, Safety, and Physical Education* includes standards for HIV/AIDS education in seventh through 12th grades. These standards require this instruction to:

- investigate and examine current information about HIV/AIDS in order to differentiate related facts, opinions, and myths;
- examine and identify the importance of sexual abstinence in adolescent relationships;

- demonstrate refusal skills (saying “no”), negotiation skills and peer resistance skills related to sexual health;
- analyze the transmission and methods of prevention for STDs and HIV;
- identify risk behaviors and situations involving possible exposure to HIV;
- examine the relationships between injecting drug use (IDU) and contact with contaminated blood products and the transmission of HIV; and
- analyze the efficiency of artificial means of birth control in preventing the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

A school district must provide written notification of all sexuality and HIV/AIDS -prevention classes. Parents or guardians can submit written notification if they do not want their children to participate in such classes. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Oklahoma Statutes 70-11-103.3, 70-11-105.1, and *the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) Integrated Curriculum: Health, Safety, and Physical Education*.

Recent Legislation

Legislation Outlines Requirements for Sexuality Education Provided with State Funding

House Bill 1534, introduced in February of 2007, would have required that recipients of state funding that provided information on sex, family planning, pregnancy counseling, or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) ensure that such information is medically accurate, factual, age-appropriate, and includes information “on both abstinence and contraception for the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases,” including HIV/AIDS. The bill moved to the House Committee on Public Health but failed to pass.

Oklahoma’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- In 2007, 49% of female high school students and 53% of male high school students in Oklahoma reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 3% of female high school students and 9% of male high school students in Oklahoma 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 19% of male high school students in Oklahoma 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 34% of male high school students in Oklahoma 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, 55% of females and 64% of males in Oklahoma 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, 20% of females and 12% of males in Oklahoma 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 30% of males in Oklahoma reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 18% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, 89% of high school students in Oklahoma reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 90% of high school students nationwide.

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

- The Department of Health received \$690,342 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.
- Oklahoma provides \$82,256 in state revenue toward the match and requires sub-grantees to make up a portion of the match as well.
- There are two sub-grantees in Oklahoma: Delaware County Health Department and Oklahoma Family Policy Council.

Delaware County Health Department, \$60,000 (2008)

The Delaware County Health Department uses the popular, fear-based curriculum *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted?) Training* in its abstinence-only-until-marriage program. 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 of gender, sexual orientation, and family type. For example, *WAIT Training* explains, “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.”³³

Oklahoma Family Policy Council, \$125,000 (2008)

The mission of the Oklahoma Family Policy Council reads, “Founded in 1989, the Oklahoma Family Policy Council (OFPC) is a statewide nonpartisan, nonprofit research, education and communications organization working to strengthen Oklahoma families through informed, involved citizenship, community initiatives, and improved public policy.”³⁴

The organization also offers the “KEEP (Kids Eagerly Endorsing Purity)” program. The program’s mission is, “(1) to convince as many teens as possible to abstain from sex until marriage, and (2) to present

sexual expression within marriage as society’s behavioral standard. KEEP teaches kids that abstinence-until-marriage is the only sure way to avoid STDs, emotional damage and pregnancies.”⁵

Oklahoma Family Policy Council uses the *Choosing the Best* series in its abstinence-only-until-marriage programs. 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.”⁶

The organization is part of Marriage Network Oklahoma, “An exciting outreach of the Christian faith-based community and associated nonprofit organizations to strengthen Oklahoma marriages.”⁷ In addition, it coordinates with organizations around the state during a National Day of Prayer. Oklahoma Family Policy Council explains the day this way: “The intent of this prayer, as expressed in the Bible in II Chronicles 7:14, is to humble ourselves, confess national sins, express repentance, and to ask for Almighty God’s blessings.” The organization also works with the Oklahoma Pro-Life Media Coalition to, “Provide strategic leadership for this influential coalition of Oklahoma print and broadcast media partners, all of whom are committed to advancing pro-life issues and helping to create a ‘culture of life.’”⁸

A final initiative held at the State Capitol, “Purity Day,” celebrates young people choosing to remain abstinent. The event includes several speakers and is a celebration of those who choose to live “Morally pure lives as both an expression of their personal values and in preparation for a happy marriage.”⁹ Young people who participate in this day sign virginity pledges.

Research found that 88 percent of young people who took a virginity pledge ultimately had sexual intercourse before marriage. Under certain conditions these pledges may help some adolescents delay sexual intercourse. When they work, pledges help this select group of adolescents delay the onset of sexual intercourse for an average of 18 months—far short of marriage. Researchers found that pledges only worked when taken by a small group of students. Pledges taken by a whole class were ineffective. More importantly, the studies also found that those young people who took a pledge were one-third less likely to use contraception when they did become sexually active than their peers who had not pledged. These teens are therefore more vulnerable to the risks of unprotected sexual activity such as unintended pregnancy and STDs, including HIV/AIDS. Further research has confirmed that although some students who take pledges delay intercourse, ultimately they are equally as likely to contract an STD as their non-pledging peers. The study also found that STD rates were higher in communities where a significant proportion (over 20 percent) of the young people had taken virginity pledges.¹⁰

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

- There is one CBAE grantee in Oklahoma: Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc.
- There are no AFLA grantees in Oklahoma.

The Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc., \$599,527 (CBAE 2007–2012)

The Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc. is a crisis pregnancy center. Crisis pregnancy centers typically advertise as providing medical services and then use anti-abortion propaganda,

O K L A H O M A

misinformation, and fear and shame tactics to dissuade women facing unintended pregnancy from exercising their right to choose. The initial CBAE grant in 2007 increased the organization’s revenue by 374 percent.¹¹

The organization provides abstinence-only-until-marriage programs to students in grades six through 12 and their parents.¹² As part of its program, the Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc. arranges “abstinence teas” for eighth grade girls in locations around Oklahoma.¹³

In addition, the organization employs the abstinence-only-until-marriage speaker Keith Deltano.¹⁴ Deltano is a Christian comedian who has given talks around the country in middle schools and high schools. SIECUS attended one of Mr. Deltano’s most popular presentations, “The New Sexual Revolution or Abstinence is Cool,” and found that he uses a loud, aggressive style, reminiscent of a football coach, to badger students into accepting his abstinence-only-until-marriage ideology. Deltano relies on messages of fear and shame, inaccurate and misleading information, and biased views of marriage and gender. The highlight of Deltano’s performance includes an activity designed to illustrate the ineffectiveness of condoms against HIV in which he suggests that condoms fail ten percent of the time and then he dangles a cinderblock over the genitals of an unsuspecting male student yelling, “Is ten percent good enough for you?!?! Is it good enough?!?”¹⁵

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)
Oklahoma State Department of Health www.health.state.ok.us	\$690,342 federal \$82,256 state	Title V
Delaware County Health Department	\$60,000	Title V sub-grantee
Oklahoma Family Policy Council www.okfamilypc.org	\$125,000	Title V sub-grantee
Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc. 2007–2012	\$599,527	CBAE

Adolescent Health Contact¹⁶

Marilyn Lanphier, RN, MPH
Child Guidance Service
Oklahoma State Department of Health
1000 N.E. Tenth Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73117
Phone: (405) 271-4477

Oklahoma Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

NARAL Pro-Choice Oklahoma
P.O. Box 702503
Tulsa, OK 74170
Phone: (918) 494-9585
www.prochoiceoklahoma.blogspot.com

Oklahoma Religious Coalition for
Reproductive Choice
P.O. Box 35194
Tulsa, OK 74153
Phone: (918) 481-6444
www.okrcrc.org

Planned Parenthood of Arkansas and
Eastern Oklahoma
5780 South Peoria
Tulsa, OK 74105
Phone: (918) 858-5200
www.plannedparenthood.org/arkansas-eastern-oklahoma/index.htm

Planned Parenthood of Central Oklahoma
619 North West 23rd Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73103
Phone: (405) 528-0221
www.ppcok.org

Oklahoma Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Oklahoma Family Policy Council
3908 North Peniel Avenue
Bethany Bank Tower, Suite 100
Bethany, OK 73008
Phone: (405) 787-7744
www.okfamilypc.org

Oklahomans for Life
3105 East Skelly Drive, Suite 605
Tulsa, OK 74105
Phone: (918) 749-5022
www.okforlife.org

Newspapers in Oklahoma¹⁷

Bartlesville Examiner-Enterprise
Newsroom
4125 Nowata Road
Bartlesville, OK 74006
Phone: (918) 335-8200
www.examiner-enterprise.com

The Daily Ardmoreite
Newsroom
117 West Broadway
Ardmore, OK 73401
Phone: (580) 223-2200
www.ardmoreite.com

O K L A H O M A

Enid News and Eagle
Newsroom
P. O. Box 1192
Enid, OK 73702
Phone: (800) 299-6397
www.enidnews.com

The Lawton Constitution
Newsroom
P.O. Box 2069
Lawton, OK 73502
Phone: (580) 353-0620
www.swoknews.com

Muskogee Daily Phoenix
Newsroom
P.O. Box 1968
Muskogee, OK 74402
Phone: (918) 684-2828
www.muskogeephoenix.com

News-Capital & Democrat
Newsroom
P.O. Box 987
McAlester, OK 74502
Phone: (918) 423-1700
www.mcalesternews.com

The Norman Transcript
Newsroom
P.O. Drawer 1058
Norman, OK 73070
Phone: (405) 321-1800
www.normantranscript.com

The Oklahoman
Newsroom
P.O. Box 25125
Oklahoma City, OK 73125
Phone: (405) 475-3311
www.newsok.com

Ponca City News
Newsroom
300 North Third Street
Ponca City, OK 74601
Phone: (580) 765-3311
www.poncacitynews.com

Tulsa World
Newsroom
315 S. Boulder Avenue
Tulsa, OK 74103
Phone: (918) 581-8400
www.tulsaworld.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, 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>>.

³ Joneen Krauth-Mackenzie, *WAIT (Why Am I Tempted) Training*, Second Edition (Greenwood Village, CO: WAIT Training, undated). For more information, see SIECUS' review of WAIT Training at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.html>.

⁴ "About Us," Oklahoma Family Policy Council, accessed 15 October 2008, <http://www.okfamilypc.org/about_ofpc.htm>.

⁵ "Current Initiatives," Oklahoma Family Policy Council, accessed 15 October 2008, <http://www.okfamilypc.org/current_initiatives.htm>.

⁶ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best, Inc., 2001-2007).

⁷ "Current Initiatives," Oklahoma Family Policy Council, accessed 15 October 2008, <http://www.okfamilypc.org/current_initiatives.htm>.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Peter Bearman and Hannah Brückner "Promising the Future: Virginity Pledges and the Transition to First Intercourse." *American Journal of Sociology* 106.4 (2001): 859-912; Peter Bearman and Hannah Brückner, "After the promise: The STD consequences of adolescent virginity pledges," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 36.4 (2005): 271-278.

¹¹ Pregnancy Resource Center of Southern Oklahoma, Inc., 990 Form, 2006, p. 1.

O K L A H O M A

¹² “Pregnancy Resource Center Gets Abstinence Education Grant,” *The Daily Ardmoreite*, 28 September 2007, accessed 14 March 2008.

¹³ “Things to Do: Events,” *Muskogee Phoenix*, 11 March 2008, accessed 14 March 2008, <http://www.muskogee phoenix.com/things todo/local_story_071181541.html>.

¹⁴ Leah Simmons, “Sex, comedy, and education,” *The Daily Ardmoreite*, (21 September 2008), accessed 12 October 2008, <<http://www.ardmoreite.com/community/x1213266185/Sex-comedy-and-education>>.

¹⁵ SIECUS’ review is based an hour long version of “The New Sexual Revolution” which SIECUS staff attended at a public high school in Loudoun County, Virginia in February 2007, as well as information from Deltano’s website and newspaper articles about his other appearances.

¹⁶ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

¹⁷ 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](#).