



Oregon

Oregon received \$1,474,915 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2003.¹

Oregon Sexuality Education Law

Oregon does not mandate sexuality education. However, Oregon statutes state that when comprehensive sexuality education courses are taught they must:

- Be age-appropriate
- Enhance students' understanding of sexuality as a normal and healthy aspect of human development
- Include information about how responsible sexual behavior reduces the risk for STDs, HIV, and pregnancy
- Teach about abstinence, but not to the exclusion of other material and instruction on contraception and disease reduction measures
- Acknowledge the value of abstinence while not devaluing or ignoring those young people who have had or are having sexual intercourse
- Provide the latest medical information regarding the success and failure rates of all forms of contraception
- Validate through course material and instruction the importance of honesty with oneself and others, respect for each person's dignity and well-being, and responsibility for one's actions
- Encourage family communication

See Oregon Revised Statute 336.455.

In 2002, the Oregon State Board of Education unanimously voted to revise the Oregon Administrative Rule focusing on HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C. The rule is now more focused on educational efforts and states:

- Each school district shall teach an age-appropriate plan of instruction focusing on infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis B and C as an integral part of health education and other subjects.
- Instruction must occur through elementary, middle, and senior grade levels

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 2003 begins on October 1, 2002 and ends on September 30, 2003.

- Instruction must occur on at least an annual basis and include the latest scientific information.
- Curricula must include information about abstinence, contraception, and other disease reduction measures.
- Instruction must be culturally and gender sensitive.

For more information, see Oregon State Board of Education. Oregon Administrative Rule 581-22-1440, Revised October 17th, 2002: *Infectious Diseases Including Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and Hepatitis B and C.*

Recent Legislation

SIECUS is not aware of any recent legislation regarding sexuality education in Oregon.

Recent Events

Action Agenda

In 2002, the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Department of Human Services in cooperation with parents, schools, students, and community groups devised the Oregon Teen Pregnancy Action Agenda (the Action Agenda). The Action Agenda underscores Oregon's support for comprehensive sexuality education.

The agenda has six parts that include abstinence programs, youth development, community values, and ensuring access to contraception for minors. The program also has twelve indicators for measuring success. Two of these indicators are: "the percentage of 6th through 12th grade schools that report using research-based, effective sexuality education curricula" and "the number of 6th through 12th grade teachers who receive training in effective, research-based sexuality education."

In 2000, Oregon's Statewide HIV Prevention Planning Group began to develop the *Oregon HIV Prevention Comprehensive Plan*, which was instituted in 2002. This plan targets at-risk groups, such as men who have sex with men, partners of HIV-positive individuals, and youth. Two of the seven objectives of this plan focus on school based strategies for youth: *Positive Speakers in The Schools*, a program in which people living with HIV/AIDS make presentations and disseminate information in schools, and *A Positive Life: Women Living with HIV*, a photographic display detailing the lives of the women living with HIV in Oregon.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Oregon faces a state budget deficit of between \$950 million and \$1.3 billion for Fiscal Year 2004. As a result, decisions are being made about spending priorities and prevention efforts around reproductive and sexual health often suffer.

Oregonians Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education² 1999

- 97.7% of Oregonians think that students should receive education about HIV/AIDS in school.
- 73.5% of Oregonians believe this education should begin in elementary school.

² *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: Prevalence Data Washington, 1999.* (Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1999). Accessed online on May 27, 2004 at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/display.asp?cat=HV&yr=1999&qkey=435&state=WA>.

- 90.5% of Oregonians would encourage a sexually active teenager to use a condom.

High School Teacher Ordered to Remove LGBTQ Support Sign, Beaverton, February 2003; Beaverton, OR

A high school teacher in Beaverton, OR was ordered by school administrators to remove a sign advertising a county-run support group for gay teens after some parents complained. The teacher, who is openly gay himself and serves as the advisor to the school's GSA, refused to remove the sign.

School administrators said they based their decision to remove the signs on a new school regulation which requires displays to be directly related to the material taught in the classroom. According to the new regulations, teachers are also forbidden to display posters that do not relate to school-sponsored clubs.

The Beaverton Teacher's Union, however, said that the school administrators' decision showed a bias against gay teachers. The Union pointed out that the administrators allowed 30 other teachers, mostly heterosexual, to keep the same sign in their classrooms.

The school's assistant superintendent defended the new rules, saying that they are not directed at any group of students or employees, but rather an attempt to more closely monitor the teachings of "controversial" subject matter. He argued that the school administrators did not want school classrooms to become public forums where teachers push personal beliefs on students.

Later in the week, however, the administrators reversed their decision and allowed the teacher to display the sign once again.

Oregon's Youth: Statistical Information of Note

- In 2000, Oregon's abortion rate was 25 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.³
- In 2001, Oregon's birth rate was 40 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 45 per 1,000 nationwide.⁴
- Chlamydia is Oregon's most frequently reported sexually transmitted disease (STD). In Oregon, the highest rate of reported Chlamydia infections occurs in youth ages 15- 19. Chlamydia is the only STD for which reported infection rates have recently risen in Oregon. However, according to staff from the Oregon Department of Human Services, "the majority of increased infections seen in 2001 are related to more people being tested and the increased use of amplified technology by laboratories."⁵

³ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information*, (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, February, 2004). Available online at www.guttmacher.org.

⁴ A. Papillo, et.al., *Facts at a Glance*, (Washington, DC: Child Trends, February, 2004).

⁵ *Sexually Transmitted Disease: Chlamydia*, (Oregon Department of Human Services). Accessed online on May 12, 2004 at: www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/std/chlamydia.cfm.

- In 2001, only two youth ages 19 and under in Oregon were reported as being HIV positive.⁶
- Since instituting a comprehensive approach to sexuality education, the teen pregnancy rate in Oregon has fallen from 19 pregnancies per 1,000 young women ages 10 to 17 in 1995 to 14 pregnancies per 1,000 girls ages 10 to 17 in 2000. This is a 27% decrease.⁷
 - Additionally, this comprehensive approach has led to a decrease in the number of sexually active youth in Oregon. Between 1995 and 2001, the number of students in grades 9 through 12 in Oregon who reported never having sexual intercourse increased by 8%.⁸
 - Furthermore, the percentage of students in grades 9 through 12 who are currently sexually active and used contraception the last time they had intercourse increased by 12% between 1997 and 2001.⁹

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Oregon received \$460,076 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2003. 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 can be provided in part or in full by local groups. Oregon provides matching funds in the amount of \$345,057. This money is used by the Oregon Department of Human Services as part of their larger comprehensive sexuality education program.

The Title V funding goes to STARS (Students Today Aren't Ready for Sex), a program which focuses on sixth graders, and three other programs that focus on elementary school aged children.

The Oregon Department of Human Services emphasizes that the abstinence programs funded by Title V grants are only part of what is needed to prevent teen pregnancy. A memorandum from Sue Abrams of the Adult and Family Services Division of the Oregon Department of Human Services, to school districts, county health departments, and local teen pregnancy prevention groups, discusses how the abstinence programs may be helpful as part of a larger comprehensive program. Abrams states:

While we believe abstinence education is an important strategy, recent studies have shown that it is most effective as part of a comprehensive sex education program. This is certainly one of the principles strongly expressed by the Coordinating Team in the Oregon Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Action Agenda 2000. Oregon's four abstinence programs do not provide information on contraception or reproductive health issues, therefore they are only part of a comprehensive strategy.

⁶ V. Latin et. al. *Oregon HIV/STD/TB Epidemiologic Data Fact Sheets, January through December 2001.* (Oregon Department of Human Services). Accessed online on June 1, 2004: <http://www.ohd.hr.state.or.us/hst/2001rpt.pdf>.

⁷ *Oregon Teen Pregnancy Prevention Action Agenda 2002 Revision.* (Oregon Department of Human Services). Accessed online on June 1, 2004 at:

http://www.dhs.state.or.us/children/teens/tpp/action_agenda/2002/actionagenda2002.pdf

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

Special Projects of Regional and National Significance–Community Based Abstinence Education (SPRANS–CBAE) and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There is one SPRANS–CBAE grantee in Oregon: Northwest Family Services. There is one AFLA grantee in Oregon: Northwest Family Services.

Northwest Family Services developed and uses the *FACTS* (Family Accountability Communicating Teen Sexuality) curricula. SIECUS’ review of the abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula has found that they provide medically inaccurate information, rely on messages of fear and shame, discourage contraceptive use (including questioning the effectiveness of condoms to prevent HIV infection), present gender stereotypes as true, and may alienate gay and lesbian youth by describing same-sex attraction and relationships as being entirely about “attraction of a sexual-genital nature to a person of one’s own sex.”

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2003¹⁰

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS–CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Oregon Department of Human Services Office of Child and Family Health Adolescent Health Section www.dhs.state.or.us/publichealth/ah/index.cfm	\$460,076 federal/ \$345,057 state	Title V
Students Today Aren’t Ready for Sex (STARS)		Title V sub-grantee
Managing Pressures Before Marriage		Title V sub-grantee
Stop and Think		Title V sub-grantee
Youth Solutions Abstinence Education Program		Title V sub-grantee

¹⁰ SIECUS was not able to obtain exact funding information for all grantees.

O R E G O N

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Northwest Family Services 2002 – 2003	\$225,000	AFLA
DUAL GRANTEE 2003 - 2006	\$789,839	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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Oregon Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Basic Rights Oregon
 P.O. Box 40625
 Portland, OR 97240
 Phone: (503) 222-6151
www.basicrights.org

Cascade AIDS Project
 620 SW Fifth Ave., Suite 300
 Portland, OR 97204
 Phone: (503) 223-5907
www.cascadeaids.org

Planned Parenthood of the Columbia
 Willamette
 3231 SE 50th Ave.
 Portland, OR 97206
 Phone: (503) 775-4931
www.ppcw.org

Planned Parenthood Health Services of
 Southwestern Oregon
 220 E. 11th St., Suite 6
 Eugene, OR 97401
 Phone: (541) 342-6080
www.pphsso.org

Oregon Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Cascade Policy Institute
813 SW Alder, Suite 450
Portland, OR 97205
www.cascadepolicy.org

OR Christian Coalition
P.O. Box 492
Oregon City, OR 97045
Phone: (503) 557-0668
www.coalition.org

OR Right to Life
4335 River Rd. N.
Salem, OR 97303
Phone: (503) 463-8563
www.ortl.org

Stronger Families for Oregon (formerly
Oregon Center For Family Policy)
P.O. Box 2252
Salem, OR 97308
www.strongerfamilies.com

Newspapers in Oregon

The Bulletin
Rebecca Merritt
Medical/Health Reporter
1777 SW Chandler Ave.
Bend, OR 97702
Phone: (541) 383-0348

The Mail Tribune
JoNel Allecia
Reporter
111 N. Fir St.
Medford, OR 97501
Phone: (541) 776-4411

The Oregonian
Don Colburn
Medical/Health Reporter
1320 SW Broadway
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The Oregonian
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The Register-Guard
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Statesman Journal
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