



SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina received \$3,341,101 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2006.¹

South Carolina Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Schools in South Carolina are required to teach sexuality education as well as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) education. Schools are not required to teach about HIV or AIDS. State law specifies that:

In grades 6 through 8 sexually transmitted diseases are to be included as a part of instruction. And, at least one time during the four years of grades 9–12, each student shall receive at least 750 minutes of reproductive health education and pregnancy prevention education.

According to the law:

Reproductive health education means instruction in human physiology, conception, prenatal care and development, childbirth, and postnatal care, but does not include instruction concerning sexual practices outside marriage or practices unrelated to reproduction except within the context of the risk of disease. Abstinence and the risks associated with sexual activity outside of marriage must be strongly emphasized.

The law explains that “contraceptive information must be given in the context of future family planning,” which has been interpreted to mean that any information about contraception must be in the context of use during marriage. Additionally, no school may distribute contraceptives. The law states that abstinence-until-marriage must be stressed; pregnancy prevention can be covered and must be taught in gender-divided classes; and adoption can be discussed, but abortion cannot. Finally, it explains:

The program of instruction provided for in this section may not include a discussion of alternate sexual lifestyles from heterosexual relationships including, but not limited to, homosexual relationships, except in the context of instruction concerning sexually transmitted diseases.

The state does not require or suggest a specific curriculum. However, each local school board must “appoint a thirteen member local advisory committee consisting of two parents, three clergy, two health professionals, two teachers, two students, one being the president of the student body of a high school, and two other persons not employed by the local school district.”

South Carolina also states that the Department of Education and local school boards must provide “staff development activities” for educators participating in the comprehensive health program.

Parents must be informed in advance of any sexuality specific instruction and are allowed to remove their children from any part of the health education classes. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See South Carolina Comprehensive Health Education Act Code 59-32.

Recent Legislation

SIECUS is not aware of any proposed legislation regarding sexuality education in South Carolina.

Events of Note

Heritage Foundation Continues to Receive Federal Funds for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs 2005; Charleston, SC

The South Carolina-based Heritage Community Services was formed in 1995 by Anne Badgley, who remains the President and CEO, as a sister organization to the Lowcountry Crisis Pregnancy Center, which she founded in 1986 and continues to run. 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.

Heritage Community Services’ major initiative, *Heritage Keepers*, purports to teach about character, values, and goals, and to promote abstinence from “risky behavior.” SIECUS reviewed the programs’ written materials, however, and found that the program relies on clearly biased information and excludes information on sexuality-related topics such as STDs, condoms, contraception, sexual orientation, and pregnancy options. In addition, the curriculum presents gender stereotypes as true and depicts non-traditional families as troubled. The *Heritage Keepers* program originated in South Carolina and is taught in more than 22 counties in the state. According to Heritage Community Services, its materials are now being used in schools in Augusta, GA; Florida; Lexington, KY; Maine; Massachusetts; North Carolina; Rhode Island; and the Caribbean.² The organization has formed affiliates in numerous states across the country and is promoting its program internationally.

In a highly irregular use of Title V funding, South Carolina initially awarded the entire amount of its federal and state funding to Heritage Community Services without first engaging in a competitive bidding process. Beginning in 2004, a legislative amendment to the South Carolina budget required a competitive bid process. (See the Title V section for more information on Heritage Community Services.)

School Questions Controversial Topics in School Debate October 2004; Fort Mill, SC

In a controversy that gained international attention, school administrators in Fort Mill, SC, initially banned discussions of stem cell research, gay marriage, and abortion from a list of topics approved for a student debate out of concern that these topics might conflict with the state’s sexuality education laws. The school district then reversed its decision and declared that the topics could be discussed.

The debates were originally intended to mimic the presidential debates and were set to include topics such as education, taxes, faith-based initiatives, and the war in Iraq. However, a memo from school administrators changed the set-up, stating, “because of South Carolina laws, we cannot discuss such controversial issues as stem cell research, abortion or homosexual marriages.”³ Both the school principal and the superintendent said that the restriction referred to the state’s Health Education Act. The

superintendent said he believed that since these topics are supposed to be excluded from the classroom, “quite possibly, it’s an exclusion that would carry over [to a classroom debate].”

In reversing their decision, school officials explained that there was a misunderstanding about a state law, which prohibits discussion of homosexual sex and abortion in sexuality education classes. They feared that the rule would extend to student events, but learned that it does not.

South Carolina’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁴

- In 2005, 50% of female high school students and 55% of male high school students in South 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 14% of male high school students in South 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, 15% of female high school students and 24% of male high school students in South 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, 38% of female high school students and 37% of male high school students in South 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, 60% of females and 76% of males in South 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, 21% of females and 15% of males in South 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, 17% of females and 33% of males in South 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 2005, 86% of high school students in South Carolina reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, South Carolina’s abortion rate was 17 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁵
- In 2003, women ages 15–19 accounted for 17% of the 11,527 total abortions performed in South Carolina.⁶

- In 2004, South Carolina's birth rate was 52 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 41 per 1,000 nationwide.⁷

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

South Carolina received \$751,961 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. South Carolina does not match these funds. Instead, sub-grantees are required to do a dollar-for-dollar match. In 2006, two organizations received Title V funding: South Carolina Parents Involved in Education (SC PIE) and Heritage Community Services. Prior to Fiscal Year 2005, in a no-bid process, Heritage Community Services received all of South Carolina's Title V funding. (See the CBAE and AFLA section for more information on Heritage Community Services.)

South Carolina Parents Involved in Education (SC PIE) provides abstinence education training for public school teachers, faith leaders, parents, and public and private health care providers in targeted communities throughout South Carolina. It partners with various organizations throughout the state including Life Support, Inc., Dr. James Stands, OBGYN Physician, South Carolina Baptist Convention, Scott & White Hospital, South Carolina School Districts, and Pee Dee Family & Community Development Program. Life Support, Inc. provides instruction to the African-American community and has developed a coalition of over 70 African-American churches and community-based organizations. SC PIE also works with the "White faith community."

SC PIE uses the *Worth the Wait* and *Healthy Image of Sex (HIS)* curricula. SIECUS reviewed *Worth the Wait* and found that it covers some important topics related to sexuality such as puberty, anatomy, and sexual abuse, and that the curriculum is based on reliable sources of data. Despite these strengths, *Worth the Wait* relies on messages of fear, discourages contraceptive use, and promotes biased views of gender, marriage, and pregnancy options. For example, the curriculum claims that "teenage sexual activity can create a multitude of medical, legal, and economic problems not only for the individuals having sex but for society as a whole."⁸

According to SC PIE, *Healthy Image of Sex* "teaches students to live a chaste lifestyle rather than merely abstaining from sex. The advantage to this, which is explained to students, is that chastity is a virtue that is carried over into the marriage relationship."⁹ It goes on to say, "Classroom experience has shown that although a student's initial image of marriage is typically diminished, as teachers continue to define marriage, the students respond to their God-given desire to aspire to this committed relationship."¹⁰ The *HIS* curriculum relies on negative gender stereotypes, fear, and shame. For example, the manual advises teachers to tell students:

A virgin is a person who has not had sexual intercourse; to describe something as virgin means free from stain, pure, spotless, fresh, unspoiled, first. If a girl has never been penetrated, she can physically still be considered a "virgin." If she has been involved in other sexual activity (remind students of the definition of sexual activity), sexually, she is no longer a virgin, she is no longer pure, unspoiled, fresh.

It is interesting to note that the curriculum's definition of sexual activity includes "touching one's self."¹¹

Session Five of the curriculum separates students by gender. The *Manhood* session is for “boys only” and the *Modesty* session is for “girls only.”¹² The *HIS* manual also guides instructors to go over what “safe sex is not.” This includes, “sex with a condom—condoms and other barriers do not make sex physically safe....” It goes on to tell kids that “just kissing, hugging, and holding hands (making out)” is not safe sex because, “these behaviors will likely lead to sex. It’s dangerous to start.”¹³

An April 2006 SC PIE newsletter features an article by Pamela Jones, co-author of HIS curriculum. Pamela writes:

Healthy Image of Sex (HIS), an abstinence education curriculum, which began in Kershaw County has now traveled to Marlboro County, and has expanded! Beyond teaching the students—the fuller vision is now being implemented in the African-American community. Have you ever pictured something in your mind (had a vision) and experienced it coming to pass? That is what is happening in Marlboro County right now..... Casual sex, recreational sex, oral sex amongst our youth can now lead to death!! My prayer is that our society would begin to see this and choose to give our children what they deserve—a chance at life.¹⁴

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

There are three CBAE grantees in South Carolina: Heritage Community Services, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC), and South Carolina PIE. There are two AFLA grantees in South Carolina: the Children’s Council and Medical University of South Carolina.

The SCDHEC’s CBAE grant was scheduled to end in 2005, but it was awarded a no-cost extension by the federal government through June of 2006. SCDHEC sub-contracts most of its CBAE grant to Heritage Community Services.

Heritage Community Services utilizes *The Heritage Method*, “a logic model that addresses the risky behavior of adolescents from the perspective of changing the behavior that is causing the problem rather than dealing with the consequences of the risky actions.”¹⁵ Heritage Community Services promotes the abstinence-only-until-marriage message in numerous curricula and resources: *Heritage Keepers Abstinence Education I and II*, *Heritage Keepers Life Skills Education*, *Parent Education*, *Faith Community Education*, *Marriage Initiatives*, and *Family Assets & Character Councils (FACC)*.¹⁶

SIECUS reviewed *Heritage Keepers, Abstinence Education I* and found that it contains very little information about important topics in human sexuality such as puberty, anatomy, and sexual behavior. Even topics that are frequently discussed in detail in other abstinence-only-until-marriage programs, such as condoms and STDs, receive very little mention. Instead, the curriculum devotes most of its lessons to the importance of marriage and abstinence before marriage. It relies on messages of fear and shame and promotes biased views of gender, marriage, and pregnancy options. For example, the curriculum tells students that “males are more sight orientated whereas females are more touch orientated. This is why girls need to be careful with what they wear, because males are looking! The girl might be thinking fashion, while the boy is thinking sex. For this reason, girls have a responsibility to wear modest clothing that doesn't invite lustful thoughts.”¹⁷

Heritage Community Services is expanding throughout the United States with programs in California, Delaware, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island, as well a program in the Caribbean island of St. Lucia. It claims that more than 100,000 young people have been through the Heritage curriculum.¹⁸

Heritage Community Services also has several community outreach components. Its “Parent Component” consists of home visits to promote character-based life skills education within families. Its

SOUTH CAROLINA

“Faith Component” is designed to bridge gaps in communication and knowledge with faith agencies to better equip faith leaders to address issues of abstinence. Finally, Heritage Community Service runs a media campaign, which consists of several 30-minute “infomercials” with testimonials from young people who have chosen to abstain. The slogan of the media campaign is: “If you knew better, you’d do better!”¹⁹

Heritage Community Services’ website contains information about STDs but there is no information regarding prevention methods other than abstinence. In addition, many of the messages are fear-based. The website also includes a section on how marriage benefits both individuals and society. For example, the website states that “marriage appears to reduce the risk that children and adults will either be perpetrators or victims of crime.”²⁰ It also states as a conclusion that “married women appear to have a lower risk of domestic violence.”²¹

The “Teen Pulse” section of the Heritage Community Service website has an STI/STD fact sheet, but fails to talk about any prevention method besides remaining abstinent unless “in the commitment of a healthy marriage.”²² The “Questions & Advice” section of the Teen Pulse website also offers information about sex and relationships, such as, “feeling in love or even planning to get married may create a sense of intimacy, or even commitment. However, such relationships can be fairly easily dissolved and can never offer the security and protection of marriage.”²³ In answer to the question, “How far can you go with the opposite sex?,” the website states, “A good minimum guideline is to declare everything covered by a bathing suit as off-limits. . . . Once someone is excited physically, it can be difficult to stop.”²⁴

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)
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control www.scdhec.net	\$751,961 federal	Title V
Heritage Community Services DUAL GRANTEE 2006–2011 www.heritageservices.org	\$632,780 \$600,000	Title V sub-grantee CBAE

SOUTH CAROLINA

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)
South Carolina Parents Involved in Education (SC PIE) DUAL GRANTEE 2005–2007 www.scpie.org	\$48,842 \$755,203	Title V sub-grantee CBAE
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Extension through June 2006 Sub-contractor is Heritage Community Services www.scdhec.gov	\$800,000	CBAE
The Children’s Council 2002–2007	\$208,937	AFLA
Medical University of South Carolina 2002–2007 www.musc.edu	\$225,000	AFLA

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of South Carolina
2712 Middleburg Dr., Suite 104
Columbia, SC 29204
Phone: (803) 799-5151
www.aclusc.org

New Morning Foundation
P.O. Box 11531
Columbia, SC 29211
Phone: (803) 929-0088
www.newmorningfoundation.org

South Carolina Campaign to Prevent
Teen Pregnancy
1331 Elmwood Ave., Suite 140
Columbia, SC 29201
Phone: (803) 771-7700
www.teenpregnancysc.org

South Carolina Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Heritage Community Services
2810 Ashley Phosphate Rd., Suite B-9
Charleston, SC 29418
Phone: (843) 863-0508
www.heritageservices.org

Palmetto Family Council
P.O. Box 11953
Columbia, SC 29211
Phone: (803) 733-5600
www.palmettofamily.org

Newspapers in South Carolina

Anderson Independent-Mail
Alison Glass
Education Reporter
1000 Williamston Rd.
Anderson, SC 29621
Phone: (864) 260-1275

Charleston City Paper
Greg Hambrick
Education Reporter
1049 Morrison Dr.
Charleston, SC 29403
Phone: (843) 577-5304

Free Times
Eric Ward
News Editor
6904 Main St. #108
Columbia, SC 29203
Phone: (803) 765-0707 ext. 136

The Greenville News
Liv Osby
Health & Medicine Reporter
P.O. Box 1688
Greenville, SC 29602
Phone: (864) 298-4100

The Post and Courier
Yvonne Wegner
Education Reporter
134 Columbus St.
Charleston, SC 29403
Phone: (843) 577-7111

Spartanburg Herald-Journal
Ashlei Stevens
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SOUTH CAROLINA

The State
Zeme Reid
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Phone: (803) 771-8415

The State
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The Sun News
Jessica Foster
Education Reporter
914 Frontage Rd. E
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
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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 Heritage Community Services, Fact Sheet, acquired 2004.

³ "School removes gay marriage from debate," *CNN.com*, 1 October 2004.

⁴ 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>>.

⁵ *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>>.

⁶ *South Carolina Community Assessment Network: Pregnancy*, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, (5 January 2005), accessed 26 January 2007, <<http://scangis.dhec.sc.gov/scan/pregnancy/>>.

⁷ *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>.

⁸ Patricia Sulak, *Worth the Wait* (Temple, TX: Scott & White Memorial Hospital, 2003). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *Worth the Wait* at <http://www.communityactionkit.org/curricula_reviews.html>.

⁹ *Healthy Image of Sex: Curriculum Summary*, South Carolina PIE, accessed 15 February 2007, <<http://www.scpie.org/pubs/HISSummary.pdf>>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ "Session 2: Healthy Sex/Safe Sex," Healthy Image of Sex, accessed 15 February 2007, <http://www.healthyimageofsex.com/section2_Rev2006.pdf>.

¹² "Healthy Image of Sex, Table of Contents," Healthy Image of Sex, accessed 15 February 2007, <www.healthyimageofsex.com>.

¹³ "Session 2: Healthy Sex/Safe Sex," Healthy Image of Sex, accessed 15 February 2007, <http://www.healthyimageofsex.com/section2_Rev2006.pdf>.

¹⁴ "Healthy Image of Sex Goes to Marlboro County," South Carolina PIE Newsletter, April 2006, accessed 15 February 2007, <<http://www.scpie.org/pubs/April2006Newsletter.pdf>>.

¹⁵ "Our Programs," Heritage Community Services, (2006), accessed 5 February 2007, <<http://heritageservices.org/ourprograms.html>>.

¹⁶ "Marriage Matters: 26 Conclusions from the Social Sciences Marriage Will Help Your Future Family Life!," Heritage Community Services, (2006), accessed 5 February 2007, <<http://heritageservices.org/Marriage%20Matters--26%20Conclusions.pdf>>.

¹⁷ Anne Badgley and Carrie Musselman, *Heritage Keepers Student Manual* (Charleston, SC: Heritage Community Services, 1999). For more information, see SIECUS' review of *Heritage Keepers* at <<http://www.communityactionkit.org/reviews/HeritageKeepers.html>>.

¹⁸ "Tell Me More," Maine Character Resource, (2007), accessed 11 April 2007, <http://www.mainecharacterresource.org/tell_me_more.aspx>.

¹⁹ “Home: Company Profile,” Heritage Community Services, (2006), accessed 5 February 2007, <<http://heritageservices.org/index.html>>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ “Teen Pulse,” Heritage Community Services, (2005-2006), accessed 24 January 2007, <<http://heritageservices.org/teenintro.html>>.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.