



SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina received \$1,840,922 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2004.¹

South Carolina Sexuality Education Law

Schools in South Carolina are required to teach sex education as well as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) education. Schools are not required to teach about HIV or AIDS. 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 goes on to state, “contraceptive information must be given in the context of future family planning,” meaning that any information about contraception must be in the context of use during marriage.

Abstinence-until-marriage must also be stressed. Pregnancy prevention is covered and must be taught in gender-divided classes. Adoption can be discussed, but abortion cannot.

The law also states, “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.”

Parents are 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 Code of Laws of South Carolina Title 59, Chapter 32.

Recent Legislation

SIECUS is not aware of any recent legislation related to sexuality education in South Carolina.

Events of Note

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

In a controversy that gained international attention, school administrators in Fort Mill, South Carolina, originally banned the discussion 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. In early October 2004, the school district reversed its decision and declared that the topics could be discussed

The original announcement of the debates explained that the set-up was intended to mimic the presidential debates and would include topics such as education, taxes, faith-based initiatives, and the war in Iraq. However, the memo stated that, "because of South Carolina laws, we cannot discuss such controversial issues as stem cell research, abortion or homosexual marriages."² 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]."

School officials later explained that there was a misunderstanding about a state law that prohibits discussion of homosexual sex and abortion in sexuality education classes. The administration had feared the rule would extend to student events, but in fact it does not.

South Carolina's Youth: Statistical Information of Note³

- In 2001, 50% of female high school students and 60% of male high school students in South Carolina reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 43% of female high school students and 49% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2001, 7% of female high school students and 21% 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 2001, 16% of female high school students and 28% of male high school students in South Carolina reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 11% of female high school students and 17% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2001, 38% of female high school students and 42% 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 33% of females and 33% of males nationwide.
- In 2001, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 19% of females and 30% of males in South Carolina reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 31% of males nationwide.
- In 2001, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 59% of females and 71% of males in South Carolina reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 51% of females and 65% of males nationwide.

- In 2001, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 17% of females and 9% 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 2001, 6% of female high school students and 5% of male high school students in South Carolina reported ever having been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant compared to 5% of female high school students and 4% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2001, 88% of high school students in South Carolina reported having been taught about HIV/AIDS in school compared to 89% 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.⁴
- In 2003, women ages 15-19 accounted for 17% of the 11,527 total abortions performed in South Carolina.⁵
- In 2002, South Carolina's birth rate was 53 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.⁶

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

South Carolina received \$769,000 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2004. 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. South Carolina does not match these funds. Instead, \$635,000 is contracted to Heritage Community Services, a community based organization that provides the state match with \$608,000 (more than the federal requirement). The remaining \$130,000 is used to staff the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health, and for other administrative costs. The governor's office has jurisdiction over this funding.

Heritage Community Services uses this funding to conduct in-school abstinence-only-until-marriage programs. The organization uses *Heritage Keepers*, a character-based curriculum that it designed. SIECUS' review of this program found that it relied on fear and shame and contained biased messages about gender and non-traditional family structures.

Special Projects of Regional and National Significance—Community Based Abstinence Education (SPRANS—CBAE)⁷ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There is one SPRANS—CBAE grantee in South Carolina: Heritage Community Services. There are two AFLA grantees in South Carolina: the Children's Council and Medical University of South Carolina.

Heritage Community Services utilizes *The Heritage Method, A Systemic Approach to Changing Attitudes and Behavior Regarding Abstinence Outside of Marriage*. This program identifies several reasons for teens engaging in sex outside of marriage, including “a general lack of community support that sends a decisive and unified message about abstinence” and “a lack of community programs that will enforce this message.” The organization states that both are necessary to combat the cultural emphasis on sex and sensuality.

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 is a personal and societal benefit. For example, the website states that “marriage appears to reduce the risk that children and adults will either be perpetrators or victims of crime.”

Heritage Community Services produces two 450-minute abstinence education curricula, *Abstinence Education (ABED) I & II*, and three character-based life-skills curricula, *Heritage Keepers I, II & III*. *Abstinence Education I* includes the definition of abstinence; setting values and goals; information on reproduction, sex, and marriage; STD slides and information; and information on how to refuse sex. *ABED II* discusses the social and psychological benefits of abstinence, the benefits of marriage, and the negative effects of the media. *Heritage Keepers I, II, and III* focus on character building and include topics such as peer independence, how to apologize, having pride in yourself and your family, affirmation of abstinence, how to deal with stress and emotions, and marriage fulfillment.

Heritage Community Services also has several community outreach components. The “Parent Component” consists of home visits to promote character-based life skills education within families. The “Faith Component” is designed to bridge gaps in communication and knowledge with faith agencies to better equip faith leaders to address issues of abstinence. Heritage Community Service also 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!”

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2004

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (Includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control www.scdhec.gov	\$769,000	Title V
Heritage Community Services	\$635,000	Title V sub-grantee
TRIPLE GRANTEE 2001-2004	\$637,985	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)
TRIPLE GRANTEE www.heritageservices.org	\$600,000	South Carolina Department of Social Services

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (Includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant The Children's Council 2004-2005	\$208,937	AFLA
Medical University of South Carolina 2004-2005	\$225,000	AFLA

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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 South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
 Bureau of Maternal and Child Health
 Mills/ Jarrett Complex
 1751 Calhoun St.
 Columbia, SC 29201
 Phone: (803) 545-4483

South Carolina Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of South Carolina
 1338 Main St., Suite 800
 Columbia, SC 29201
 Phone: (803)799-5151
www.aclusc.org

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

South Carolina Campaign to Prevent
 Teen Pregnancy
 1511 Gregg St.
 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
 PO Box 11953
 Columbia, SC 29211
 Phone: (803) 733-5600
www.palmettofamily.org

Newspapers in South Carolina

The Greenville News

Liv Osby
Health & Medicine Reporter
PO Box 1688
Greenville, SC 29602
Phone: (864) 298-4422

The Post and Courier

Judy Watts
Health & Medicine Editor
134 Columbus St.
Charleston, SC 29403
Phone: (843) 937-5743

The State

Betsey Guzior
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PO Box 1333
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The State

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The Sun News

Elaine Gaston
Medical/Health Reporter
914 Frontage Rd. E
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Phone: (843) 626-0299

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 2004 begins on October 1, 2003 and ends on September 30, 2004.

² "School removes gay marriage from debate," *CNN.com*, 1 October 2004.

³ Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Jo Anne Grunbaum, et. al., "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2001," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 51.SS-4, (28 June 2002): 1-64, accessed 28 January 2005, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>>. South Carolina did not participate in the 2003 YRBS.

⁴ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, February, 2004), accessed 28 January 2005, <www.guttmacher.org>.

⁵ *South Carolina Community Assessment Network: Pregnancy*, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (5 January 2005), accessed 7 February 2005, <<http://scangis.dhec.sc.gov/scan/pregnancy/>>.

⁶ *National Vital Statistics Reports 52.10* (Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics, 2003), 48, accessed 4 February 2005, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm#stat%20tables>>.

⁷ In FY 2004 SPRANS—CBAE was administered within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. In FY 2005 this funding stream was moved to HHS' Administration for Children and Families and is now referred to simply as Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE).