



SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina received \$2,741,101 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2005.¹

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. 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.”

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 59-32-30.

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 Keeper*, purports to teach about character, values, and goals, and 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, or 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 over 22 counties in the state. According to Heritage Community Services, its materials are now being utilized in schools in Augusta, GA; Florida; Lexington, KY; Maine; Massachusetts; North Carolina; Rhode Island; and the Caribbean.² In fact, 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.

School Questions Controversial Topics in School Debate

September 2004; Fort Mill, SC

In a controversy that gained international attention, school administrators in Fort Mill, SC 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. In early October 2004, the school district 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 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.⁷

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

South Carolina received \$751,961 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2005. 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 2005, for the first time, two organizations received Title V funding: South Carolina Parents Involved in Education (South Carolina PIE) and Heritage Community Services. In the past, in a no-bid process, Heritage Community Services received all Title V funding. South Carolina is moving toward granting funds to even more community-based organizations in the coming years. Some funding 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.

South Carolina PIE is using Title V funding to run a pilot project in Marlboro County. For more information on South Carolina PIE, see the Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) section.

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. For more information on Heritage Community Services, see the Community-Based Abstinence Education section.

Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE)⁸ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There are two CBAE grantees in South Carolina: South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and South Carolina PIE. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control gives most of its CBAE grant to 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 sexual activity 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 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.”

Heritage Community Services also produces two 450-minute abstinence education curricula, *Abstinence Education (ABED) I & II*, and three character-based life-skills curricula, *Heritage Keepers I, II & III*. *ABED 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. Its “Parent Component” consists of home visits to promote character-based life skills education within families. Its “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!”

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2005

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control	\$751,961	Title V
DUAL GRANTEE www.scdhec.gov	\$800,000	CBAE

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, and AFLA)
Length of Grant Heritage Community Services www.heritageservices.org	\$485,000	Title V sub-grantee
South Carolina Parents Involved in Education (PIE) DUAL GRANTEE www.scpie.org	\$150,000 \$755,203	Title V sub-grantee CBAE
The Children’s Council 2005–2006	\$208,937	AFLA
Medical University of South Carolina 2005–2006 www.musc.edu	\$225,000	AFLA

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

Owens Goff
 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

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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
PO 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

Anderson Independent-Mail
Stephanie Tracy
County News Reporter
1000 Williamston Rd.
Anderson, SC 29621
Phone: (864) 260-1342

Bluffton Today
Sara Wright
Education Reporter
1316 Fording Island Rd.
Bluffton, SC 29910
Phone: (843) 815-0817

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

The Community Times
Education Editor
466 W Cheves St.
Florence, SC 29501
Phone: (843) 667-1818

Free Times
Education Editor
6904 Main St. #108
Columbia, SC 29203
Phone: (803) 765-0707

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

The Post and Courier
Seanna Adcox
Education Reporter
134 Columbus St.
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Spartanburg Herald-Journal

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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 2005 begins on October 1, 2004 and ends on September 30, 2005.

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 8 June 2006, <<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: Guttmacher Institute, February 2004), accessed 28 January 2005, <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/state_pregnancy_trends.pdf>.

⁶ *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/>>.

⁷ *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>>.

⁸ In Fiscal Year 2004 SPRANS–CBAE was administered within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. In Fiscal Year 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).