



## VERMONT

***Vermont received \$69,885 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2006.<sup>1</sup>***

### **Vermont Sexuality Education Law and Policy**

The Vermont Education Code includes sexuality education as part of its comprehensive health program. This program must be taught in elementary and secondary schools. The comprehensive health program has 10 parts, four of which are related to sexuality:

- body structure and function, including the physical, psychosocial and psychological basis of human development, sexuality and reproduction;
- disease, such as HIV infection, other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), as well as other communicable diseases, and the prevention of disease;
- family health and mental health, including instruction which promotes the development of responsible personal behavior involving decision-making about sexual activity including abstinence; skills which strengthen existing family ties involving communication, cooperation, and interaction between parents and students; and instruction to aid in the establishment of strong family life in the future, thereby contributing to the enrichment of the community; and
- human growth and development, including understanding the physical, emotional, and social elements of individual development and interpersonal relationships including instruction in parenting methods and styles. This shall include information regarding the possible outcomes of premature sexual activity, contraceptives, adolescent pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, and abortion.

Vermont's *Sample Comprehensive HIV Policy for Schools: Pre-K-12*, developed by the Department of Education, includes suggestions for HIV/AIDS-prevention curriculum and instruction. In addition, Vermont statute requires that "the commissioner [of education] with the approval of the state board shall establish an advisory council on comprehensive health education....The council shall assist the department of education in planning a program of comprehensive health education in the public schools."

Parents or guardians may remove their children from a sexuality education class if the content is in conflict with their religious beliefs. This is referred to as an "opt-out" policy.

See Vermont Statute, Title 16, Part 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter 7, Sections 131 through 135 and the *Sample Comprehensive HIV Policy for Schools: Pre-K-12*.

### **Recent Legislation**

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

### **Events of Note**

SIECUS is not aware of any recent events related to sexuality education in Vermont.

### **Vermont's Youth: Statistical Information of Note<sup>2</sup>**

- In 2005, 3% of female high school students and 7% of male high school students in Vermont 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, 10% of female high school students and 12% of male high school students in Vermont 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, 32% of female high school students and 30% of male high school students in Vermont 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 69% of males in Vermont 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, 39% of females and 28% of males in Vermont 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, 19% of females and 28% of males in Vermont reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 28% of males nationwide.
- In 2000, Vermont's abortion rate was 14 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2004, Vermont's birth rate was 21 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 41 per 1,000 nationwide.<sup>4</sup>

### **Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding**

Vermont received \$69,885 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage 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. Vermont matches the federal funding with \$52,698 in

VERMONT

state funds. The Vermont Department of Health oversees the funding along with an advisory committee that includes staff from Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, staff from Senator Jim Jeffords' (I) and Senator Patrick Leahy's (D) offices, representatives from various schools and organizations, and physicians from throughout the state.

Vermont uses its funding for a statewide media campaign titled *There For Me*, which targets parents of youth ages 10–14. The goal of the campaign is to promote parent-child communication around risk-taking behaviors, such as early sexual behavior and alcohol, specifically how drug and alcohol use increases vulnerability to sexual advances. This campaign emphasizes point G of the federal government's 8-point definition of "abstinence education," which states that programs must, "teach young people how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances." This campaign also works with physicians who see adolescent patients to teach them how to talk with adolescents and their families about the link between alcohol use and sexual activity.

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

There are no CBAE or AFLA grantees in Vermont.

**Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2006**

<b>Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee</b> <b>Length of Grant</b>	<b>Amount of Grant</b>	<b>Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)</b>
Vermont Department of Health  <a href="http://healthvermont.gov">http://healthvermont.gov</a>	\$69,885 federal \$52,698 state	Title V

**Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator**

Sally Kerschner  
Vermont Department of Health  
108 Cherry St.  
Burlington, VT 05402  
Phone: (802) 865-7707

VERMONT

**Vermont Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

ACLU of Vermont  
137 Elm St.  
Montpelier, VT 05602  
Phone: (802) 223-6304  
[www.acluvt.org](http://www.acluvt.org)

Mountain Pride Media  
P.O. Box 1122  
Burlington, VT 05402  
Phone: (802) 861-6486  
[www.mountainpridemedia.org](http://www.mountainpridemedia.org)

Outright Vermont  
P.O. Box 5235  
Burlington, VT 05402  
Phone: 1-800-GLB-CHAT  
[www.outrightvt.org](http://www.outrightvt.org)

Planned Parenthood of Northern New  
England  
183 Talcott Rd., Suite 101  
Williston, VT 05495  
Phone: 1-800-287-8188  
[www.ppnne.org](http://www.ppnne.org)

**Vermont Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education**

Center for American Cultural Renewal  
P.O. Box 1566  
Rutland, VT 05701  
Phone: (802) 775-6247  
[www.cfacr.org](http://www.cfacr.org)

Vermont Right to Life Committee  
P.O. Box 1079  
Montpelier, VT 05601  
Phone: (802) 229-4885  
[www.vrlc.net](http://www.vrlc.net)

**Newspapers in Vermont**

*Bennington Banner*  
James Therrien  
Editor  
425 Main St.  
Bennington, VT 05201  
Phone: (802) 447-7567

*Brattleboro Reformer*  
Kristi Ceccarossi  
News Editor  
Black Mountain Rd.  
Brattleboro, VT 53011  
Phone: (802) 254-2311 ext. 160

*The Burlington Free Press*  
Molly Walsh  
Education Reporter  
191 College St.  
Burlington, VT 05401  
Phone: (802) 660-1874

*The Caledonian-Record*  
Gail Pison-Montany  
Medical/Health Editor  
190 Federal St.  
Saint Johnsbury, VT 05819  
Phone: (802) 748-8121

VERMONT

*Rutland Herald*  
Sarah Hinckley  
Education Reporter  
27 Wales St.  
Rutland, VT 05701  
Phone: (802) 747-6121

*St. Albans Messenger*  
Assignment Editor  
281 N. Main St.  
Saint Albans, VT 05478  
Phone: (802) 524-9771

*The Times Argus*  
Community News Reporter  
540 N. Main St.  
Barre, VT 05641  
Phone: (802) 479-0191

---

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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>>.

<sup>3</sup> *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>>.

<sup>4</sup> *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](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr55/nvsr55_01.pdf)>.