



SIECUS

State Profile

VERMONT

*Vermont received no federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2008.*¹

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 ten 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

Bill Aims to Amend Anti-Discrimination Laws

House Bill 228, introduced in February 2007, would have required the state's anti-discrimination statutes to include gender identity as a protected class. The bill defined gender identity as "an individual's actual or perceived gender identity, or gender-related characteristics intrinsically related to an individual's gender or gender identity, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth." The bill was sent to the House Committee on the Judiciary on February 6, 2007, but failed to move and died.

Legislation to Require HPV Vaccine for Girls

House Bill 256, introduced in February 2007, would have required girls entering sixth grade to have received the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination. Students may be exempt for religious or moral reasons, as long as the parents/guardians sign a statement acknowledging the receipt of information about the link between HPV and cervical cancer. The bill would have also appropriated funds to the Vermont Department of Health for the purchase of HPV vaccines. The bill was sent to the House Committee on Human Services on February 8, 2007, but failed to move and died.

Vermont's Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- In 2007, 4% 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 10% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 10% of female high school students and 13% 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 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 33% of female high school students and 31% 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 36% of female high school students and 34% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 58% of females and 67% of males in Vermont reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 55% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 38% of females and 28% of males in Vermont reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 19% of females and 13% of males nationwide.
- In 2007, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 22% of females and 33% of males in Vermont reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 18% of females and 28% of males nationwide.

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

- Vermont was eligible for \$69,885 in federal Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2008.
- 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, however, does not apply for these funds due to the extraordinary restrictions placed upon how the money must be spent. Therefore, the state does not match funds nor does it have organizations supported by this type of federal money.

In Fiscal Year 2007, Vermont's application to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) was rejected because it did not fully meet the requirements of the A-H definition of "abstinence education." Vermont has not submitted an application since then.

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 2008

Vermont did not receive abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2008.

Adolescent Health Contact³

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108 Cherry Street
Burlington, VT 05402
Phone: (802) 652-4179

Vermont Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of Vermont
137 Elm Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
Phone: (802) 223-6304
www.acluvt.org

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

Outright Vermont
241 N. Winooski Avenue
McClure Mutigenerational Building
Burlington, VT 05402
Phone: (800) GLB-CHAT
www.outrightvt.org

Planned Parenthood of Northern New
England
183 Talcott Road, Suite 101
Williston, VT 05495
Phone: (800) 287-8188
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

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

Newspapers in Vermont⁴

The Burlington Free Press
Newsroom
191 College Street
Burlington, VT 05401
Phone: (802) 660-1874
www.burlingtonfreepress.com

Rutland Herald
Newsroom
27 Wales Street
Rutland, VT 05701
Phone: (802) 747-6133
www.rutlandherald.com

St. Albans Messenger
Newsroom
281 N. Main Street
Saint Albans, VT 05478
Phone: (802) 524-9771
www.samessenger.com

The Times Argus
Newsroom
540 N. Main Street
Barre, VT 05641
Phone: (802) 479-0191
www.timesargus.com

¹ This refers to the federal government's fiscal year, 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 2008 began on October 1, 2007 and ended on September 30, 2008.

² Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Danice K. Eaton, et. al., "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2007," *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 57.SS-4 (6 June 2008), accessed 4 June 2008, <<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>>.

³ SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

⁴ This section is a list of major newspapers in your state with contact information for their newsrooms. This list is by no means exhaustive and does not contain the local level newspapers which are integral to getting your message out to your community. SIECUS strongly urges you to follow stories about the issues that concern you on the national, state, and local level by using an internet news alert service such as [Google alerts](#), becoming an avid reader of your local papers, and establishing relationships with reporters who cover your issues. For more information on how to achieve your media goals visit the [SIECUS Community Action Kit](#).