



WISCONSIN

Community-based organizations in Wisconsin received \$3,607,842 in federal funds for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2007.¹

Wisconsin Sexuality Education Law and Policy

Wisconsin state law encourages, but does not require, school boards to provide classes in sexuality education. However, the law does identify educational goals and expectations; one of these goals is personal development. The law also states that school boards shall provide a program to discuss the human body and how to maintain lifelong health. It adds that this program should include instruction in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and should be offered in high schools. According to Wisconsin law, this instruction may include:

- self-esteem, responsible decision-making, and personal responsibility;
- interpersonal relationships;
- discouragement of adolescent sexual activity;
- family life and skills required of a parent;
- human sexuality; reproduction; family planning, as defined in [state law] s.243.07, including natural family planning; human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome; prenatal development; childbirth; adoption; available prenatal and postnatal support; and male and female responsibility; and
- sex stereotypes and protective behavior.

If a school board provides instruction in any of these areas, it must “also provide instruction in marriage and parental responsibility.” These classes may occur in kindergarten through twelfth grade and must be age-appropriate. Classes must also stress that “abstinence from sexual activity before marriage is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.”

The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is authorized to develop a health education program that includes instruction about STDs and AIDS. DPI also has the authority to develop health curriculum guidelines, but is prohibited from requiring local school boards to use a specific curriculum.

The DPI created the *Wisconsin School HIV/AIDS Policy Tool Kit* in 2003 to increase the number of schools implementing policies and procedures, including curricula, related to HIV/AIDS. The *Wisconsin Human Growth and Development Resource Packet* was also created by the DPI to assist schools in sexuality education by providing information such as research on teen sexual behavior, locally developed materials on curricula, and evaluation tools.

Parents and guardians must be given the opportunity to review all materials related to sexuality education classes. If such classes are offered, school boards must also form advisory councils consisting of

“parents, teachers, school administrators, pupils, health care professionals, members of the clergy, and other residents of the school district” to review the curricula at least every three years.

Parents or guardians may remove their children from sexuality education classes with a written note to the teacher or principal. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Wisconsin Statutes 115.35, 118.01, 118.019, *School HIV/AIDS Policy Tool Kit*, and *Human Growth and Development Resource Packet*.

Recent Legislation

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

Events of Note

*After an Emotional School Board Meeting, Board Accepts Curriculum Update
December 2006; Edgerton, WI*

Wisconsin state law calls for all school districts that teach sexuality education to review their curriculum every three years. This year, controversy erupted in Edgerton as the school board undertook this process. The curriculum advisory committee, composed of teachers, parents, and community members, reviewed Edgerton’s curriculum. The majority of the committee was pleased with the existing program and recommended that the board approve some minor updates.

One member of the advisory committee, however, asked to give a minority report to the board. Her criticisms of the program focused on its discussions of contraception, condom demonstrations, and the fact that speakers from a local women’s health center are allowed into classrooms. She complained that teachers were given too much latitude in teaching the curriculum, that sections were not age appropriate, and that parents were not given enough information. “We need to be consistent with the message that we are sending our young people,” she said. “Do we teach children how to drive drunk safely? Do we teach them how to cheat safely? No.”²

In response, teachers and administrators vigorously defended their program. “[The dissenting committee member] is suggesting that we not be allowed to teach both sides of the story,” said the sixth grade health teacher. “Don’t tie our hands. Allow us the chance to protect your children in a way that we know works.”³

In the end, the board voted unanimously to accept the curriculum update proposed by the majority of the advisory committee. However, some board members were concerned about presenters from the women’s health center telling students where they could obtain contraception without the knowledge of their parents.⁴ The board voted to specifically disclose that part of the program in a separate letter to parents.

Wisconsin’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁵

- In 2007, 46% of female high school students and 43% of male high school students in Wisconsin reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 3% of female high school students and 6% of male high school students in Wisconsin reported having had sexual intercourse before age 13 compared to 4% of female high school

W I S C O N S I N

students and 10% of male high school students nationwide.

- In 2007, 13% of female high school students and 13% of male high school students in Wisconsin 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, 36% of female high school students and 30% of male high school students in Wisconsin 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, 56% of females and 68% of males in Wisconsin 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, 28% of females and 23% of males in Wisconsin 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 Wisconsin reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 18% of females and 28% of males nationwide.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

- In 2007, 53% of female high school students and 66% of male high school students in Milwaukee, Wisconsin reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 46% of female high school students and 50% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2007, 5% of female high school students and 20% of male high school students in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 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, 16% of female high school students and 36% of male high school students in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 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, 40% of female high school students and 45% of male high school students in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 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, 50% of females and 72% of males in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 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, 14% of females and 12% of males in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 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, 13% of females and 24% of males in Milwaukee, Wisconsin 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

The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services would have been eligible for \$161,398 in Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding in Fiscal Year 2007. However, in March, 2007 the department announced that it would be rejecting Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds because of the increasing restrictions on how these funds must be spent. Governor Jim Doyle explained, “There’s a debate now about whether kids should be taught abstinence only. Of course abstinence is the best choice for kids, and that’s an important message they need to hear. But ideology isn’t more important than our kids’ health.”

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. Because it rejected Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funds, however, Wisconsin did not receive funds, provide matching funds, or have organizations supported by this type of federal money in Fiscal Year 2007.

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

There are four CBAE grantees in Wisconsin: AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, The Center for Self-Sufficiency, High Expectations, Inc., and Rosalie Manor Community and Family Services (receives two grants). There are two AFLA grantees in Wisconsin: Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians and Wise Women Gathering Place.

AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin “provides abstinence education and support to young people dealing with the issues and pressures related to becoming sexually active.”⁶ The organization provides one-on-one peer outreach and presentations at high schools.⁷

The Center for Self-Sufficiency works with schools, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations to lead “a major initiative to offer Community-Based Abstinence Education programming in Wisconsin, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.”⁸

High Expectations, Inc. states that its mission is “to empower youth to be active members of the community while strengthening the community’s support of healthy youth development.”⁹

Rosalie Manor Community and Family Services is a member of the Milwaukee Alliance for Teen Abstinence (MAFTA), a coalition of several organizations that provide abstinence-only-until-marriage programs to young people in the Milwaukee area. These programs include daily after-school programs in several schools, an eight-week summer program that meets for up to seven hours each day, and the “Parents & Community” program.¹⁰

In addition, Rosalie Manor Community and Family Services and MAFTA also produce a media campaign, titled “A Crying Shame,” that includes radio ads and a website. The campaign relies on fear and shame. In one radio spot, a young man says, “Hey Devon. I heard you had sex with Keisha. She’s nasty. Man, didn’t you hear? She gave Kevin herpes. That’s something you’ll have for the rest of your life. Man, you better go see a doctor. You should have thought about this before you had sex.”¹¹

W I S C O N S I N

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2007

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)
AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin 2005–2008 www.arcw.org	\$733,542	CBAE
The Center for Self-Sufficiency 2005–2008	\$799,500	CBAE
High Expectations, Inc. 2007–2011 www.high-expectations.org	\$300,000	CBAE
Rosalie Manor Community and Family Services DUAL GRANTEE 2004–2007 2007–2011 www.rosaliemanor.org www.acryingshame.info	\$798,000 \$599,800	CBAE CBAE
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians 2004–2009 www.redcliff.org	\$152,000	AFLA

W I S C O N S I N

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, AFLA, and other funds)
Wise Women Gathering Place 2002-2007 www.wisewomengp.org	\$225,000	AFLA

Adolescent Health Contact¹²

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 Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services
 One W. Wilson St., Room 531
 P.O. Box 8916
 Madison, WI 53708
 Phone: (608) 267-9662

Wisconsin Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of Wisconsin
 207 East Buffalo St., Suite 325
 Milwaukee, WI 53202
 Phone: (414) 272-4032

Fair Wisconsin
 122 State St., Suite 500
 Madison, WI 53703
 Phone: (608) 441-0143
www.fairwisconsin.org

NARAL Pro-Choice Wisconsin
 122 State St., Suite 308
 Madison, WI 53703
 Phone: (608) 287-0016
<http://www.prochoicewisconsin.org>

Planned Parenthood Advocates of Wisconsin
 P.O. Box 2566
 Madison, WI 53701
 Phone: (608) 256-7549
<http://www.ppawi.org>

Wisconsin Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Family Research Institute of Wisconsin
 P.O. Box 2075
 Madison, WI 53701
 Phone: (608) 256-3228
www.fri-wi.org

Pro-Life Wisconsin
 19270 North Hills Drive
 P.O. Box 221
 Brookfield, WI 53045
 Phone: (262) 796-1111
www.prolifewisconsin.org

Newspapers in Wisconsin¹³*The Capital Times*

Newsroom
P.O. Box 8060
Madison, WI 53708
Phone: (608) 252-6400
www.madison.com

Green Bay Press-Gazette

Newsroom
435 E. Walnut St.
Green Bay, WI 54301
Phone: (920) 431-8400
www.greenbaypressgazette.com

The Journal Times

Newsroom
212 4th St.
Racine, WI 53403
Phone: (262) 634-3322
www.journaltimes.com

Kenosha News

Newsroom
5800 7th Ave.
Kenosha, WI 53140
Phone: (262) 657-1000
www.kenoshanews.com

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Newsroom
333 W. State St.
Milwaukee, WI 53203
Phone: (414) 224-2919
www.jsonline.com

Oshkosh Northwestern

Newsroom
224 State St.
Oshkosh, WI 54901
Phone: (920) 235-7700
www.thenorthwestern.com

The Post-Crescent

Newsroom
306 W. Washington St.
Appleton, WI 54911
Phone: (920) 733-4411
www.postcrescent.com

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 2007 begins on October 1, 2006 and ends on September 30, 2007.

² Stacy Vogel, "Sex Ed Debate Heats Up Meeting," *Janesville Gazette*, 12 December 2006, accessed 15 December 2006, <<http://www.gazetteextra.com/sexed121206.asp>>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ 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>>.

⁶ "Prevention Services: Abstinence Education," AIDS Resource Center of Wisconsin, (2005), accessed 18 March 2008, <<http://www.arcw.org/prevent.htm>>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "Community-Based Abstinence Education," Center for Self-Sufficiency, Inc., accessed 18 March 2008, <<http://www.centerinc.org/abstinence.html>>.

⁹ "About Us: Our Mission," High Expectations, accessed 18 March 2008, <<http://www.high-expectations.org/about.htm>>.

¹⁰ "Youth & Parent Programs: Abstinence Program & Curriculum," A Crying Shame, (2006), accessed 18 March 2008, <<http://www.acryingshame.info/parents/p5.html#pdf5>>.

¹¹ "The Campaign: Radio Ad," A Crying Shame, (2006), accessed 18 March 2008, <<http://www.acryingshame.info/campaign/cp4.html>>.

¹² SIECUS has identified this person as a state-based contact for information on adolescent health and if applicable, abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.

¹³ This section is a list of major newspapers in your state with contact information for their newsrooms. This list is by no means inclusive 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](#).