



West Virginia

West Virginia received \$921,135 in federal funding for Abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2003.¹

West Virginia Sexuality Education Law

West Virginia law does not require sexuality education, but does require HIV/AIDS-prevention education in grades six through 12. According to a West Virginia legislative rule, “The goal of this policy is to assist in the protection of students by providing them with the knowledge and skills necessary to avoid behaviors that will put them at the risk of infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).”

Each county board must integrate HIV-prevention education into health courses and may also include it in science, development, and social studies courses.

Parents or guardians may remove their children from any part of this instruction by written notification to the principal. This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.

See Legislative Rule of the West Virginia Board of Education 126-50A and 126-50B (West Virginia Board of Education Policies 2422.4 and 2422.45).

Recent Legislation

The West Virginia legislature carries bills over from one session to the next upon request only from an odd to an even year. West Virginia’s legislative session ended on March 21, 2004.

Responsible Sexuality Education in Schools Act Died, 2004 Session

House Bill 2907, the *Responsible Sexuality Education in Schools Act*, was introduced on February 7, 2003. In its findings, the bill recognized that comprehensive sexuality education – education that discusses abstinence and contraception – helps delay the onset of sexual activity, reduce the frequency of sex, and reduce the number of sexual partners among teens. The finding also recognized that abstinence-only programs do not delay the onset of sexual activity or the frequency of sex. The bill died at the end of the 2004 legislative session.

Bill Requiring Fetal Development Instruction Died

House Bill 4533, introduced in February 2004, would have required that each middle school and high school require a curriculum that teaches fetal development. Violations would result in a criminal fine. The bill died at the end of the 2004 legislative session.

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 2003 begins on October 1, 2002 and ends on September 30, 2003.

Events of Note*West Virginia Attorney General's Office Cuts Anti-Bullying Program**January 2003*

An anti-bullying program called the *Civil Rights Team Project* which was run by the West Virginia Attorney General's office in 20 schools came under fire in October 2002. Parents, community members, and religious groups voiced opposition to the program because it discussed homosexuality. The parents took their complaints about the program to the state board of education who halted the program until a board committee could review it.

Due to the criticism, the West Virginia Attorney General's office dropped the anti-bullying program in January 2003. The Managing Deputy Attorney General said, "A program that has aroused so much controversy and objection is no longer useful. If it's going to be successful, it needs the support of parents and the community."²

*Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grant Cancelled**March 2002; Upshur, WV*

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources cancelled an "Abstinence Only Education" grant agreement with the Stockert Youth Center, citing the organization's failure to comply with program requirements. Compliance problems included "failure to implement evaluation protocols, failure to submit evaluation data, failure to attend required meetings, and failure to meet program goals and objectives." It was also determined that 95 percent of the funding was used for salary and benefits.

The director of the Upshur Youth Council at the Stockert Youth Center has "formulated a plan to restructure" the program. A county administrator said, however, that "it would appear that the abstinence grant is gone."³

West Virginia's Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁴

- In 2003, 55% of female high school students and 49% of male high school students in West Virginia reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 45% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 4% of female high school students and 10% of male high school students in West Virginia 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 2003, 17% of female high school students and 16% of male high school students in West Virginia reported having had four or more lifetime sexual partners compared to 11% of female high school students and 18% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 44% of female high school students and 34% of male high school students in West Virginia reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual

² "Attorney General Scraps Civil Rights Team Project," *Associated Press*, (Charleston, WV), January 23, 2003.

³ C.J. Walton, "County: Abstinence Grant Being Canceled at Youth Center," *The Inter-Mountain*, Feb. 25, 2002.

⁴ Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: J. Grunbaum, et. al., "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance — United States, 2003," *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 53, no.SS-2, May 21, 2004, pp. 1-95. Available online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>.

intercourse in the three months prior to the survey) compared to 35% of females and 34% of males nationwide.

- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 21% of females and 30% of males in West Virginia reported having used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 30% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 58% of females and 74% of males in West Virginia reported having used condoms the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 57% of females and 69% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, among those high school students who reported being currently sexually active, 28% of females and 21% of males in West Virginia reported having used birth control pills the last time they had sexual intercourse compared to 21% of females and 13% of males nationwide.
- In 2003, 5% of female high school students and 4% of male high school students in West Virginia 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 2003, 89% of high school students in West Virginia reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, West Virginia's abortion rate was 10 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁵
- In 2001, West Virginia's birth rate was 46 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 45 per 1,000 nationwide.⁶

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

West Virginia received \$487,536 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2003. 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. West Virginia Office of Maternal and Child Health oversees this funding.

The program focuses on youth ages 10 to 14 and their parents, though some sub-grantees serve older youth. There are eight sub-grantees, each of whom receive \$46,000 in funding. Sub-grantees run a wide range of projects, including media campaigns; work in elementary, middle and high schools; and peer mentoring.

⁵ U.S. *Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information*, (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, February, 2004). Available online at www.guttmacher.org.

⁶ A. Papillo, et.al., *Facts at a Glance*, (Washington, DC: Child Trends, February, 2004).

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

There is one SPRANS–CBAE grantee in West Virginia: Community Actions of South Eastern West Virginia. There are no AFLA grantees in West Virginia.

Community Actions of South Eastern West Virginia teaches the *FACTS* curricula in eighth grade classrooms for two West Virginia counties. According to SIECUS’ review, the *FACTS* curricula are fear-based abstinence-only-until-marriage programs that rely on negative messages, use distorted information, and include biases about marriage and family structure, gender, sexual orientation, and pregnancy options.

FACTS provides more information on puberty, human sexual response, and human reproduction than most fear-based, abstinence-only-until-marriage curricula. Unfortunately, much of this information is presented in a limited or biased manner that seems designed to promote one point of view rather than simply inform students. The curricula present especially biased information in discussions on condoms, contraception, abortion, STDs, and HIV/AIDS. Other topics such as sexual orientation and masturbation are not discussed.

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2003

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS–CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources West Virginia Abstinence Education Project www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/icah/Abstinence/	\$487,536	Title V
Catholic Community Services / Gabriel Project (The Northern Panhandle Coalition for Abstinence Education)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Doddridge County Family Resource Network	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Marshall University Research Corporation (Coalition for Abstinence)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Rainelle Medical Center (School Improvement Council at Meadow Bridge High School)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee

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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		
Upshur County Commission (Upshur County Partnership for Abstinence)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Wayne County Board of Education (Wayne County Abstinence Education Coalition)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Windy Mountain Learning Center (Safe and Structured Places Committee)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Youth Health Service (Community of Caring)	\$46,000	Title V sub-grantee
Community Actions of South Eastern West Virginia 2001-2004 www.casewv.org	\$433,599	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)

Past Federal Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS-CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Length of Grant		
Youth Health Services, Inc. 2001-2002 www.youth-health.org	\$85,000	SPRANS-CBAE (Planning Grant)

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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West Virginia Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of West Virginia
P.O. Box 3952
Charleston, WV 25339
Phone: (304) 345-9246

Inside and OUT!
PO Box 5835
Huntington, WV 25703
www.geocities.com/WestHollywood/6273/Lr.htm

Rainbow Pride of West Virginia
Inc.
P.O. Box 2624
Charleston, WV 25329
Phone: (304) 345-9938
www.pridewv.com

West Virginia Lesbian and Gay Coalition
(WVLGC)
P.O. Box 11033
Charleston, WV 25339
Phone: (304) 343-7305

West Virginia Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

West Virginia Family Foundation
P.O. Box 11752
Charleston, WV 25339
Phone: (304) 965-6700
www.wvfamily.org

West Virginians For Life, Inc.
427 Spruce St.
Morgantown, WV 26505
Phone: (304) 291-LIFE
www.WvforLife.org

Newspapers in West Virginia

Bluefield Daily Telegraph
Kathy Kish
Medical/Health Writer
928 Bluefield Ave.
Bluefield, WV 24701
Phone: (304) 327-2800

Charleston Daily Mail
Therese Cox
Medical/Health Reporter
1001 Virginia St. E.
Charleston, WV 25301
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The Charleston Gazette
John Heys
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