



WEST VIRGINIA

West Virginia received \$393,000 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2005.¹

West Virginia Sexuality Education Law and Policy

West Virginia law does not require sexuality education, but does require HIV/AIDS-prevention education in sixth through twelfth grades. 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. West Virginia does not require any specific curriculum; however, a suggested curriculum framework, includes sexuality education.

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, 2422.45, and 2520.5).

Recent Legislation

Legislation Would Allow Counseling of Students in Sex Education

House Bill 3210 would, upon the request of the student or when it appears to be in their best interest, allow employees of the state board of education or county board to counsel a student in “basic sex education, societal expectations and roles of men and women, and birth control methods, including abstinence, medications, devices, and abortion.” This counseling would remain confidential. HB 3210 was introduced in January 2006 and currently resides in the Committee on Education.

Faith-Based, Abstinence-Only, and Anti-Choice Facilities Would Have to Adhere to Standards

Introduced in January 2006 and currently in the House Committee on the Judiciary, House Bill 3298 would require that faith-based, abstinence-only, and anti-choice facilities give full information to “pregnant girls and women” regarding sex education, contraception, abortion, and other subjects.

Events of Note

SIECUS is not aware of any recent events regarding sexuality education in West Virginia.

West Virginia's Youth: Statistical Information of Note²

- 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 intercourse in the three months prior to the survey) compared to 35% of female high school students and 34% of male high school students 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 HIV/AIDS 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.³

- In 2002, West Virginia’s birth rate was 45 per 1,000 women ages 15–19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.⁴

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

West Virginia received \$393,000 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. In West Virginia, the state match is provided by sub-grantees. West Virginia Office of Maternal and Child Health oversees this money and provides funding to five sub-grantees: Gabriel Project/Catholic Community Services (The Northern Panhandle Coalition for Abstinence Education), Ritchie County Board of Education (receives two grants), Rainelle Medical Center (School Improvement Council at Meadow Bridge High School), Wayne County Board of Education (Wayne County Abstinence Education Coalition), and Windy Mountain Learning Center (Safe and Structured Places Committee).

The program focuses on young people ages 10–14 and their parents, though some sub-grantees serve older youth. Sub-grantees run a wide range of projects, including media campaigns; elementary, middle, and high school programs; and peer mentoring programs.

The West Virginia Abstinence Education Project uses some of its funding to support an interactive website, <http://www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/ica/Abstinence/>, which includes a frequently asked questions section. In response to the question, “Are condoms an effective method of birth control?” the West Virginia Abstinence Education Project answers:

Condoms greatly reduce the risk of pregnancy, by about 90%, if they are used correctly, if they are used every time you have sex or put the penis near the vagina, if they don’t break or leak (doesn’t happen often, but it happens), if they don’t slip off, and if the contents are not spilled near the vagina after sex.

We couldn’t resist pointing out two things here:

1. It sounds like a lot has to go just perfect for this to protect you.
2. Condoms don’t protect you from the some of the bad emotional feelings you may get when you have sex.⁵

The frequently asked question page also covers the topic of abstinence and oral sex. The page categorizes oral sex, anal sex, and mutual masturbation as sex and warns that even mutual masturbation can put one in danger of catching STDs.⁶

Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE)⁷ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There are no CBAE and no AFLA grantee in West Virginia.

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

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes Title V, CBAE, and AFLA)
West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources West Virginia Abstinence Education Project www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/icach/Abstinence/	\$393,000 federal	Title V
Gabriel Project/ Catholic Community Services (The Northern Panhandle Coalition for Abstinence Education) DUAL GRANTEE www.heart.handsforhope.com/abstinence.htm	\$44,000 \$44,000	Title V sub-grantee Title V sub-grantee
Ritchie County Board of Education	\$44,000	Title V sub-grantee
Rainelle Medical Center (School Improvement Council at Meadow Bridge High School) www.rmchealth.org	\$44,000	Title V sub-grantee
Wayne County Board of Education (Wayne County Abstinence Education Coalition) www.wvde.state.wv.us/boe	\$44,000	Title V sub-grantee
Windy Mountain Learning Center (Safe and Structured Places Committee)	\$44,000	Title V sub-grantee

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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Phone: (304) 558-5722

West Virginia Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

ACLU of West Virginia
PO Box 3952
Charleston, WV 25339
Phone: (304) 345-9246
www.aclu-wv.org

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

Rainbow Pride of West Virginia, Inc.
PO Box 2624
Charleston, WV 25329
Phone: (304) 345-9938

West Virginia Lesbian and Gay Coalition
(WVLGC)
PO Box 11033
Charleston, WV 25339
Phone: (304) 343-7305
<http://members.aol.com/wvlgc>

West Virginia Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

West Virginia Family Foundation
PO Box 3421
Charleston, WV 25334
Phone: (304) 965-6700
www.wvfamily.org

West Virginians For Life, Inc.
427 Spruce St.
Morgantown, WV 26505
Phone: (304) 291-5433
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
Monica Orosz
Medical/Health Editor
1001 Virginia St. E
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: (304) 348-4874

The Charleston Gazette
Chandra Broadwater
Education Reporter
1001 Virginia St. E
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: (304) 348-5194

The Charleston Gazette
Doug Imbrogno
Medical/Health Editor
1001 Virginia St. E
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: (304) 348-1254

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The Dominion Post
Pam Queen
Medical/Health Editor
1251 Earl L. Core Rd.
Morgantown, WV 26505
Phone: (304) 291-9441

Coal Valley Newspapers, Inc.
Education Editor
475 Lower Main St.
Madison, WV 25130
Phone: (304) 369-1165

Exponent Telegram
Pam Kendall
Medical/Health Editor
324 Hewes Ave.
Clarksburg, WV 26301
Phone: (304) 626-1449

The Herald-Dispatch
Andrea Copley Smith
Medical/Health Editor
946 5th Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
Phone: (304) 526-2792

The Herald-Dispatch
Sarah Zopfi
Education Reporter
946 5th Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
Phone: (304) 526-2773

The Intelligencer
Betsy Bethel
Medical/Health Staff Editor
1500 Main St.
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: (304) 233-0100

The Lincoln Journal, Inc.
Education Editor
328 Walnut St
Hamlin, WV 25523
Phone: (304) 824-5101

*Moorefield Examiner & The Weekender
Newspapers*
Education Editor
132 S. Main St.
Moorefield, WV 26836
Phone: (304) 530-6397

News and Sentinel
Kristofer McKenna
Medical/Health Editor
519 Juliana St.
Parkersburg, WV 26101
Phone: (304) 485-1891

The Post-Report
Education Editor
801 N. Kanawha St.
Beckley, WV 25801
Ph Phone: (304) 255-4400

The Register-Herald
Bev Davis
Medical/Health Editor
801 N. Kanawha St.
Beckley, WV 25801
Phone: (304) 255-4474

The Register-Herald
Jessica Farrish
Education Reporter
801 N. Kanawha St.
Beckley, WV 25801
Phone: (304) 255-4465

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Twin City/Valley Press
Education Editor
2222 2nd Ave.
Nitro, WV 25143
Phone: (304) 755-0270

Valley Ranger
Education Editor
200 S. Court St.
Lewisburg, WV 24901
Phone: (304) 645-1206

Wheeling News-Register
Betsy Bethel-McFarland
Medical/Health Editor
1500 Main St.
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: (304) 233-0100

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 Unless otherwise cited, all statistical information comes from: Jo Anne Grunbaum, et. al., “Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance—United States, 2003,” *Surveillance Summaries, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 53.SS-2 (21 May 2004): 1-95, accessed 28 January 2005, <<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash/yrbs/>>. West Virginia did not participate in the 2005 YRBS.

³ *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>.

⁴ *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>>.

⁵ *Frequently Asked Questions About Sex*, West Virginia Abstinence Education Project, accessed 17 November 2005, <<http://www.wvdhhr.org/mcfh/icah/Abstinence/FAQ.htm>>.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ 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).