



Connecticut State of Sex Ed

Sex education is not required, but HIV/AIDS education is. Health education is required and must instruct on "human growth and development instruction" and "disease prevention". Family life education MAY be taught if local school districts choose to teach it and the state board of education must come up with guidelines for this; however, schools are not required to use this curriculum guidance.



[View Bill Tracker](#)

Current Requirement

- Connecticut schools are **not** required to teach sex education, also known as *family life education*. However, they **are** required to provide health education which includes instruction on “human growth and development” and “disease prevention”, including **required instruction on HIV/ AIDS**.
 - This curriculum is not required to align with the **National Sex Education Standards**.
- Connecticut has no law regarding instruction on abstinence.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on consent.
- Parents or guardians can remove their children from sex education and HIV/AIDS education with written notification. **This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.**

- Connecticut has no statute regarding medically accurate sex education instruction.

RECENT LEGISLATION SHAPING THE STATE LANDSCAPE

Advocates [continue to call out](#) the need for sex education to be required in Connecticut schools; however, SIECUS has not observed any progressive sex education legislation introduced in the past few years. Instead, the 2025 legislative session saw the introduction of restrictive legislation such as [Senate Bill 578](#) which would reframe family life education by centering marriage, similar to abstinence-until-marriage rhetoric, and requiring for curriculum to be reviewed every five years to ensure alignment with “contemporary community standards”, reaffirming local control over sex education which perpetuates gaps in the education Connecticut youth receive about their bodies and relationships.

In recent years, sexual assault prevention advocates have made some progress in the state with the passage of [HB 5243](#) (2022) and [HB 5262](#) (2024). [House Bill 5243](#) requires the administration of the Connecticut School Health Survey, which is adapted from CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey, to grades nine through twelfth. This survey will be required to include questions on assessing the risk of youth becoming victims of sexual assault. [House Bill 5262](#), also known as Public Act No. 24-118, requires the inclusion of a sexual abuse and assault awareness prevention survey as part of the Connecticut School Health Survey to be given to administrators to complete. Comprehensive sex education, according to the [National Sex Education Standards](#), should include instruction in sexual assault, abuse, and violence and, in fact, one of the [benefits of this instruction is lowering rates of intimate partner violence](#).

Schools in Connecticut are required to provide instruction on human growth and development and disease prevention; however, this does not specify any sexual or reproductive health-related instruction. They are also required by law to instruct on HIV/AIDS. The *Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework* offers sexual health education guidelines for educators, but state [statute does not require schools](#) to follow them. Further, it states that the decision to utilize curriculum or teach family life education altogether is up to the discretion of individual school districts, also known as “local control”.

Local control over sex education presents unique challenges that have resulted in a glaring disparity regarding the quality of sex education that students receive. Such discretion allows for the implementation of policies and curriculum that stigmatize marginalized youth, such as students of color and LGBTQAI+ youth, and presents further challenges in ensuring that low income districts have access to the resources needed to implement sex education.

Right now, advocates can take action to ensure young people in their community have access to quality sex education. Particularly, advocates can invest in local school board races to elect strong advocates who support sex education. Advocates can also contact their local school board to determine what topics are missing from sex education instruction, such as instruction on consent, sexual orientation and gender identity, and contraceptives. They can then vocalize the important need for advancing instruction requirements in their community. Advocates are encouraged to take action on pending legislation that seeks to advance or restrict the principles of sex education.

Connecticut's 2025 legislative session convenes January 8th, 2025 and adjourns June 4th, 2025.

Further, advocates can contact their representatives to discuss the critical need for a statewide sex education mandate in Connecticut. Advocates are encouraged to use the [SIECUS Community Action Toolkit](#) to guide local efforts to advance sex education. For more information on getting involved in local and state advocacy for sex education, reach out to our State Policy Action Manager, Miranda Estes (mestes@siecus.org)

More on sex ed in Connecticut...

State Law: A Closer Look

Connecticut state law does **not** require schools to teach sex education, but [Connecticut General Statutes §§ 164-10-16\(b\)–\(f\)](#) does require schools to teach “human growth and development” and “disease prevention” via health education. Connecticut law also states: “Each local and regional board of education shall offer during the regular school day planned, ongoing and systematic instruction on acquired immune deficiency syndrome [AIDS], as taught by legally qualified teachers.” According to [Sec. 10-16c.](#), The

Connecticut State Board of Education is charged with developing family life education curriculum guidelines that “shall include, but not be limited to, information on developing a curriculum including family planning; human sexuality; parenting; nutrition; and the emotional, physical, psychological, hygienic, economic and social aspects of family life, provided the curriculum guides **shall not include information pertaining to abortion** as an alternative to family planning.” However, Connecticut statute also states that the decision to instruct family life education must be left to the discretion of local or regional boards of education ([Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-16d.](#)).

Parents or guardians may remove their children from sex education and/or HIV/AIDS education classes with written notification. [This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.](#)

State Standards

The [Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework](#) provides guidance for health education, including sexual health education in Connecticut. This 81-page document includes STI prevention, contraception, anatomy, puberty, healthy relationships, and more. These guidelines are [not required](#) to be followed by law and are meant to serve as recommendations for Connecticut schools.

Youth Sexual Health Data

Young people are more than their health behaviors and outcomes. While data can be a powerful tool to demonstrate the sex education and sexual health care needs of young people, it is important to be mindful that these behaviors and outcomes are impacted by systemic inequities present in our society that affect an individual’s sexual health and well-being. In recent years, there has been an increase in legislative attacks on the implementation of CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) which [tracks six categories of health risk behaviors](#) including sexual health behaviors. **To learn more about Connecticut's 2023 YRBS results, [click here](#).** In 2023, Connecticut only participated in high school YRBS data collection, not middle school.

Connecticut School Health Profiles Data

In 2024, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released the 2022 [School Health Profiles](#), which measure school health policies and practices and highlight which health topics were taught in schools across the country. Since the data were collected from self-administered questionnaires completed by schools' principals and lead health education teachers, the CDC notes that one limitation of the School Health Profiles is bias toward the reporting of more positive policies and practices. In the School Health Profiles, the [CDC identifies 22 sexual health education topics](#) as critical for ensuring a young person's sexual health. **To view Connecticut's results from the 2022 School Health Profiles Survey, visit CDC's [School Health Profiles Explorer](#) tool.**

Visit the CDC's [School Health Profiles](#) for additional information on school health policies and practices.

The quality of sex education taught often reflects funding available for sex education programs. To learn more about federal funding streams, [click here](#).