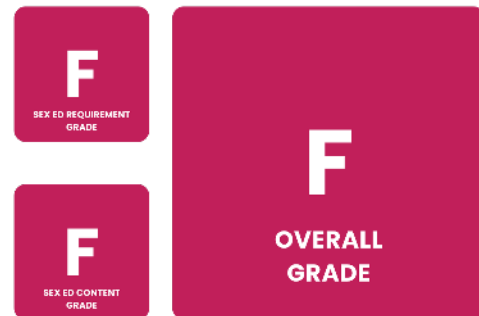




## Indiana State of Sex Ed

Sex education is not required in schools, but HIV/AIDS instruction is. There are no requirements for age appropriate, medically accurate, or evidence based instruction, and curriculum must stress abstinence. Recent laws shape school policy against LGBTQIA+ students, and promote parental rights in education.



[View Bill Tracker](#)

### Current Requirement

- Indiana schools are **not** required to teach sex education. However, schools are required to provide instruction on HIV.
  - Curriculum must stress abstinence as the expected social standard.
  - Any form of sex education is banned for students in kindergarten through third grade.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Curriculum is now required to include instruction on consent, but not healthy relationships.
- Schools must provide parents with a written request for consent before offering instruction on human sexuality, including a summary of the instruction and link to online materials. If no parental response is received within 21 days, a follow-up notice is required, and if still unresponsive, the student will receive the instruction unless opted out later. **This includes elements of both an “opt-in” and an “opt-out” policy.**

- Indiana has no regulation regarding medically accurate sex education instruction, with the exception of instruction on human growth and development.
- Curriculum must include “medically accurate” instruction on human growth and development.
  - This instruction, however, must include the viewing of a high-definition ultrasound video and animation showing fetal development, typically using “Meet Baby Olivia”, an anti-abortion, medically inaccurate propaganda film.

## RECENT LEGISLATION SHAPING THE STATE LANDSCAPE

In the 2025 legislative session, Indiana has seen a successful wave of regressive bills that restrict sex education and LGBTQIA+ student access and promote parental rights and anti-abortion propaganda. [Senate Bill 442](#) introduces a new chapter to the Indiana Code, titled “Transparency in Instruction Concerning Human Sexuality.” Despite its name, this bill represents the opposition’s attempt to attack sex education by stigmatizing vital and important curriculum, adding anti-abortion instruction, and requiring additional, unnecessary procedures for consent, review of instructional materials, and advanced notification.

Signed into law on May 5, 2025, this new chapter requires curriculum to include fetal development instruction, including a video showing fetal organ development in the womb and another showing all stages of human development from fertilization until birth. Aligned with the larger trend of “Baby Olivia” bills, the “Meet Baby Olivia” video was created by Live Action - an extremist anti-abortion group known for their deceptive and manipulative tactics. Including videos like these in sex education will only increase misinformation about abortion and perpetuate abortion stigma in a state that is already a restrictive state for abortion access. While the bill mentions that the fetal development instruction must be medically accurate, instruction on fetal development is not considered a best practice and is not included in the [National Sex Education Standards](#).

However, the bill surprisingly contains one positive addition to sex education curriculum. Indiana will require “age-appropriate instruction concerning the importance of consent to sexual activity between two individuals.” However,

the bill also mandates that governing authorities must approve and publish detailed information about the instruction of human sexuality for Indiana students in grades 4 - 12. This includes specifying the weeks during which the instruction will occur, the settings in which male and female students will be taught, the instructors' gender, and a description of the topics covered. All learning materials used must be approved and listed on the school's website.

The bill also amends existing [Indiana Code 20-30-5-17](#) to require schools to provide parents with a written request for consent before offering instruction on human sexuality (creating an opt-in policy). This request must include a summary of the instruction and a direct link to the materials published online. If no parental response is received within 21 days, a follow-up notice is required, and if still unresponsive, the student will receive the instruction unless opted out later.

[Senate Bill 143](#), also passed this current session, states that parents have fundamental rights to direct upbringing, religious instruction, education, and healthcare of their child, and therefore prohibits government entities from withholding information about the child. These attempts to increase parental oversight represent an ongoing trend of parental rights weaponized to restrict public education and student access to affirming resources. A trans sports ban via [House Bill 1041](#) also passed, prohibiting students assigned male at birth, specifically trans girls, from participating in girl's school sports. The fight for comprehensive sex education is [intersected with the fight for LGBTQIA+ rights](#) and public education must be representative of and meet the needs of all students, including transgender and non-binary youth.

Advocates have faced a significant uphill battle in advancing positive sex education requirements across Indiana. This most recent session, [House Bill 1303](#) was introduced but has not passed. The bill would have started HIV/AIDS education in grade 5 and mandates education at least once a year until graduation, also including the explicit mention of STI education. It would require comprehensive, medically accurate and age-appropriate sexual health education once for students in elementary school, and then twice in middle and high school. The similar [House Bill 1047](#) was also introduced in 2022, which would have required sex education to be comprehensive, medically accurate, and developmentally appropriate while still emphasizing abstinence. Unfortunately, in 2023, Indiana passed [House Bill 1608](#) which

prohibits sex education before 3rd grade, and also requires parental notification if a student is suspected of having gender identity that differs from their sex assigned at birth.

Sex education is not currently mandated in Indiana outside of instruction on HIV and schools that choose to teach sex education must emphasize abstinence. As Indiana schools are not required to provide sex education to students, school districts are left to decide what type of sex education, if any at all, they provide to youth. 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 LGBTQIA+ youth, and presents further challenges in ensuring that low income districts have access to the resources needed to implement sex education. This can be due to a variety of factors such as crisis pregnancy centers being able to provide free programs and thus more likely to target such students.

Right now, advocates can take action in their communities to address gaps in Indiana's sex education requirements. They can contact their local board of education and determine what topics are missing from existing sex education curricula. Advocates can then vocalize the importance of implementing specific elements of sex education, such as trauma informed, culturally responsive curriculum that addresses the needs of youth of color and LGBTQIA+ youth, or medically accurate instruction on contraceptives, healthy relationships, and consent. Advocates are encouraged to take action on pending legislation that seeks to advance or restrict the principles of sex education. **Indiana's 2025-2026 legislative session convened January 8th, 2025 and adjourned on April 24th, 2025.**

Further, advocates can contact their representatives to discuss the critical need for a statewide sex education mandate. Advocates are encouraged to use the [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](mailto:mestes@siecus.org))

**[More on sex ed in Indiana...](#)**

## State Law: A Closer Look

Indiana Codes 20-30-5-12 and 20-34-3-17 require that schools provide instruction on acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) and “integrate this effort to the extent possible with instruction on other dangerous communicable diseases.” The law states that the Department of Education must work with the Department of Health to develop AIDS prevention educational materials and make them available to school districts. These materials must “stress the moral aspects of abstinence from sexual activity” and “state that the best way to avoid AIDS is for young people to refrain from sexual activity until they are ready as adults to establish, in the context of marriage, a mutually faithful monogamous relationship.”

Indiana Code 20-30-5-13 requires that, with respect to instruction on sex education and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), accredited schools meet the following criteria:

- Require a teacher to teach abstinence from sexual activity outside of marriage as the expected standard for all school-age children;
- Include in the instruction that abstinence from sexual activity is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, STIs, and other associated health problems; and
- Include in the instruction that the best way to avoid STIs and other associated health problems is to establish a mutually faithful monogamous relationship in the context of marriage.
- Include age appropriate instruction concerning the importance of consent to sexual activity between two individuals; and
- ...provide an in-person presentation on human growth and development during pregnancy that medically accurate and age appropriate and includes the following:
  - (A) A high definition ultrasound video, at least three (3) minutes duration, showing the development of the brain, heart, sex organs, and other vital organs in early fetal development.
  - (B) A high quality computer generated rendering or animation showing the process of fertilization and each stage of fetal development inside the uterus, noting significant markers in cell growth and organ development for every week of pregnancy from fertilization to birth."

These last two requirements were added with the passage of [Senate Bill 442](#) on May 5, 2025.

In 2018, Indiana enacted [Public Law 154](#), which created [Indiana Code 20-30-5-17](#), which governs parental permission for sex education instruction. This code was updated with the passage of [Senate Bill 442](#). Schools must now provide parents with a written request for consent before offering instruction on human sexuality. This request must include a summary of the instruction and a direct link to the materials published online. If no parental response is received within 21 days, a follow-up notice is required, and if still unresponsive, the student will receive the instruction unless opted out later. [This includes elements of both an “opt-in” and an “opt-out” policy.](#)

In 2023, Indiana enacted [Public Law 248](#) (formerly known as House Bill 1608), which adds a new chapter to the Indiana Code (IC 20-30-17-2) that prohibits instruction on human sexuality prior to third grade.

## State Standards

The state department of education provides the [Indiana Academic Standards for Health and Wellness](#), which is consistent with Indiana Code [20-30-5-13](#), to use as a foundation for schools that provide sex education. The Indiana Department of Education also provides a [Health and Wellness standards overview](#). These standards do not discuss sex education, although the Health and Wellness standards overview includes Indiana statutes related to sex education.

## 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 Indiana's 2023 YRBS results, [click here](#).**

## Indiana 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 Indiana'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](#).**