



Wisconsin State of Sex Ed



Current Requirement: Sex education is not required, but instruction on HIV and STIs is via health education in Wisconsin.

- If a school chooses to provide human growth and development instruction, the curriculum must stress abstinence and be medically accurate, evidence-based, and age-appropriate.
- Curriculum is not required to include instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Curriculum is not required to provide instruction on consent.
- Parents or guardians may remove their children from the human growth and development instruction with a written request to the teacher or principal. [This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.](#)

**In 2026, the overall grade of this state changed slightly from 2025 as a result of a change in our grading methodology. For more information on grading methodology, see the Executive Summary on the State Profiles webpage.*

State Profile
Sections

Recent Legislation

More on Sex Ed

Bill Tracker

Recent Legislation Shaping the State Landscape

Advocates have faced a continuous uphill battle in advancing Wisconsin sex education requirements.

In the recent legislative session, [Senate Bill 1172](#) was introduced, which would have required schools choosing to offer human growth and development instruction to provide medically accurate instruction on interpersonal communication, reproductive anatomy, puberty, pregnancy, parenting, body image, sexuality and gender, abstinence, contraception, and more. Furthermore, in 2024, [Assembly Bill 1107](#) and [Senate Bill 155](#) would have required schools to provide human growth and development instruction in grades K-12, which includes instruction on communication, puberty, pregnancy, reproductive anatomy, contraceptive use, and the impact of media on one's on thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to sexuality and required alignment with the National Sex Education Standards, including age-appropriate, medically accurate content on healthy relationships, evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention, and regular curriculum review. All three of these bills were unsuccessful.

Regressive legislation has also been introduced to restrict access to the limited instruction provided in Wisconsin, especially at the intersection of sex education and abortion. In 2026, [Assembly Bill 918](#) and its companion [Senate Bill 887](#) were enacted into law and now require instruction on adoption within a human growth and development course. While not inherently negative, [requiring instruction on adoption within sex education is part of a recent trend](#) to stigmatize abortion within sex education by platforming adoption as the only or “better” pregnancy outcome. In 2025, [Senate Bill 371](#) and [Assembly Bill 405](#) were unsuccessfully introduced but would have required Wisconsin public schools that offer human growth and development instruction to include instruction on pregnancy and fetal development, including an ultrasound video and animation, similar to other [“Baby Olivia” legislation](#) introduced across the country to perpetuate abortion stigma and anti-abortion misinformation.

Advocates in Action

Advocates can take action in their communities to address the need for Wisconsin schools to teach human growth and development. They can contact their local board of education and determine whether sex education is being provided and what curriculum is being used.

Advocates can also contact their representatives to discuss the critical need for a statewide sex education mandate. Advocates are encouraged to use the [Community Action Toolkit](#) to strengthen local organizing efforts. For additional guidance, advocates can contact the SIECUS Policy team by emailing info@siecus.org or join the Sexuality Education Policy Action Council (SEPAC) using our [interest form](#).

More on sex ed in Wisconsin...

State Law: A Closer Look

[Wisconsin law § 115.35](#) establishes a “Health Problems Education Program,” which includes instruction on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and human growth and development. While schools must teach about STIs, they no longer must teach the human growth and

development section because Wisconsin law [§ 118.019](#) was revised in 2012. If it is offered, the “Health Problems Education Program” must “Present medically accurate information to pupils and, when age-appropriate, address the following topics:”

1. The importance of communication between the pupil and the pupil’s parents or guardians;
2. Reproductive and sexual anatomy and physiology, including biological, psychosocial, emotional, and intellectual changes that accompany maturation; ...
5. The benefits of and reasons for abstaining from sexual activity ... stress[ing] the value of abstinence as the only reliable way to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and identify[ing] the skills necessary to remain abstinent; ...
10. Adoption resources, prenatal care, and postnatal supports; and
11. The nature and treatment of STIs.

An educational program in human growth and development must also “use instructional methods and materials that do not discriminate against a pupil based upon the pupil’s race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnic or cultural background or against sexually active pupils or children with disabilities.”

After the passage of Assembly Bill 918, if a human growth and development course is provided, then it must do the following:

118.019 (2m)(e) Provides instruction in adoption, parental responsibility, and the socioeconomic benefits of marriage for adults and their children.

School boards that choose to provide instruction must provide annual notification to parents outlining the curriculum used for their child’s particular grade level. Parents and guardians must be allowed to review all materials related to sex education classes. Parents or guardians may remove their children from Human Growth and Development instruction with a written request to the teacher or principal. [This is called an “opt-out” policy.](#)

State Standard

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) produced the [Human Growth and Development Resource Guide](#), which helps implement the optional human growth and development curriculum. The DPI also offers [Wisconsin Standards for Health Education](#), which guide the general health education curriculum. “Risky sexual behaviors” are mentioned as a component of the curriculum.

Youth Sexual Health Data

The CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) tracks [adolescent health behaviors](#), including sexual health behaviors. **To learn more about Wisconsin's 2023 YRBS results, [click here](#).**

The CDC's [School Health Profiles](#) measure school health policies, practices, and the sexual health topics taught in schools. **To view Wisconsin's results from the 2024 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](#).