



Nebraska

Nebraska received \$1,144,540 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2003.¹

Nebraska Sexuality Education Law

Nebraska does not require sexuality education, indeed it explicitly states that this is a matter of local control. Nebraska does not limit or prescribe what can be taught in such classes, however, in its *Nebraska Health Education Frameworks*, the Nebraska Department of Education does recommend that schools emphasize an abstinence approach.

Nebraska does not have a policy by which parents are notified or can remove their children from sexuality education classes.

See the *Nebraska Health Education Frameworks*.²

Recent Legislation

The Nebraska legislature carried bills over from the 2003 to the 2004 session. Nebraska's legislative session ended on April 15, 2004.

Governor Signs Bill Repealing Law That Required Distribution of Information About Abortion Rights to Students

Since 1991, Nebraska state law has required that public schools inform students in grades seven through 12 about the state's law requiring parental notification before a minor can have an abortion as well as how minors can be exempted from the requirement through judicial bypass. In January 2003, state Senator Mike Foley (R) introduced a bill to repeal that law.

The Nebraska Legislature is a unicameral body which means that there is only one legislative body not a House and a Senate. The state's Constitution requires that a bill be voted on at least twice in the legislature before being sent to the governor. On January 13, 2004 the legislature voted 38-4 to approve the bill after a filibuster attempt by Senator Ernie Chambers (D) failed. On February 5, 2004, the legislature again approved the bill, this time by 35-4, after a failed attempt to amend the bill. On March 25, the bill was passed and sent to Gov. Mike Johanns (R), who signed it on March 31, 2004.

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.

² *Nebraska Health Education Frameworks*, (Lincoln, NE: Nebraska Department of Education). Available online at <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/HEALTH/framework.pdf>.

Events of Note

Nebraska Returns CDC Grant Because it Doesn't Emphasize Abstinence, 2000

A statewide controversy in Nebraska began with a rule passed by the board of education in 1997. The policy stated that any program receiving state funds must teach abstinence from sexual activity as the only appropriate option for students.³ Initially, however, there was an understanding that the statewide HIV-prevention education program supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was exempt from this rule. Educators and health professionals agreed that it would be impossible to provide effective HIV-prevention education without mentioning prevention methods other than abstinence, such as condoms.

When this exemption was brought to the attention of some board of education members in 2000, they asked the coordinator of the program to draft and defend a policy officially exempting her program from the abstinence-only approach. Despite testimony from numerous experts, parents, and people living with HIV/AIDS, the board rejected the proposal and demanded that the program follow a strict abstinence-only-until-marriage approach. In response to this ruling, the Nebraska Department of Education declared that they could not find any secular materials that followed the abstinence-only-until-marriage dictate without discussing condoms or other birth control options. The commissioner, therefore, decided that the department would make no attempt to renew the CDC grant when it expired. This decision meant that the department would no longer offer the HIV-prevention trainings and programs for teachers and school districts sponsored by the grant.⁴

Nebraska's Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁵

- In 2003, 42% of female high school students and 44% of male high school students in Nebraska reported ever having had sexual intercourse compared to 45% of female high school students and 48% of male high school students nationwide.
- In 2003, 2% of female high school students and 8% of male high school students in Nebraska 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, 10% of female high school students and 14% of male high school students in Nebraska 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, 33% of female high school students and 30% of male high school students in Nebraska reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual

³ M. Stoddard, "State Says Abstinence Only Option," *Lincoln (NE) Journal Star*, December 13, 1997.

⁴ M. Kempner, "Fewer Debates About Sexuality Education As Abstinence-Only Programs Take Foothold," *SIECUS Report*, 29, no. 6 (2001) pp. 4-5.

⁵ 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, 26% of females and 35% of males in Nebraska 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, 56% of females and 65% of males in Nebraska 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, 29% of females and 14% of males in Nebraska 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, 3% of female high school students and 3% of male high school students in Nebraska 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, 85% of high school students in Nebraska reported having been taught about AIDS/HIV in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.
- In 2000, Nebraska's abortion rate was 12 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.⁶
- In 2001, Nebraska's birth rate was 37 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 45 per 1,000 nationwide.⁷

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Nebraska received \$246,177 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. In Nebraska, the state provides \$184,633 in funding. The Nebraska Department of Health oversees the funding.

Nebraska's Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage funding is divided between sub-grantees and a media campaign. There are six sub-grantees, each of which receives a grant of \$25,000. These grantees use a variety of programs and curricula including *Friends First*, *FACTS*, and *All Stars*. The media campaign is aimed at all youth and stresses the message of being friends first and staying abstinent. Both the media campaign and the sub-grantees target high risk youth, parents, and other young people.

⁶ 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.

⁷ A. Papillo, et.al., *Facts at a Glance*, (Washington, DC: Child Trends, February, 2004).

There will be process and outcome evaluations of these projects.

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

There are two SPRANS–CBAE grantees in Nebraska: City of Norfolk/Community Character Development Coalition and Omaha/Council Bluffs Metropolitan YMCA. There are no AFLA grantees in Nebraska.

According to Omaha/Council Bluffs Metropolitan YMCA’s website, their abstinence-only-until-marriage program teaches junior high and high school students “how to have the best sex” by waiting until marriage. The program also teaches how to reject sexual advances and that alcohol and drugs may increase vulnerability to sexual advances.

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

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS–CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Nebraska Department of Health http://www.hhs.state.ne.us/ash/ashindex.htm	\$246,177 federal/ \$184,633 state	Title V
Abstinence Education Alliance Area Family YMCA	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
Abstinence Only Education Norfolk Public Schools	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
Abstinence Only Education Program Sandhills District Health Department	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
Abstinence Works Project St. Elizabeth Foundation/dba Lancaster County Abstinence Coalition	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
Grand Island Community Abstinence Project St. Francis Medical Center Foundation	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
City of Norfolk/Community Character Development Coalition 2002-2005	\$298,620	SPRANS–CBAE (Implementation Grant)

N E B R A S K A

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS- CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Omaha/Council Bluffs Metropolitan YMCA Successful Futures Adolescent Project	\$25,000	Title V sub-grantee
DUAL GRANTEE 2003-2006 www.metroymca.org	\$599,743	SPRANS-CBAE (Implementation Grant)

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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Nebraska Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

American Civil Liberties Union of
Nebraska
941 O Street, Suite 1020
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 476-8091
www.aclunebraska.org

Nebraska Planned Parenthood Voters for
Choice
2246 O Street
Lincoln, NE 68510
Phone: (402) 441-3328

Religious Coalition for Reproductive
Choice
PO Box 31395
Omaha, NE 68130
Phone: (402) 558-1221

Nebraska Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Family First
Physician's Resource Council
P.O. Box 82114
Lincoln, NE 68501
Phone: (402) 435-3210
www.familyfirst.org

Nebraska Right to Life Committee
P.O. Box 80410
Lincoln, NE 68501
Phone: (402) 438-4802
www.Nebraskartl.org

Newspapers in Nebraska

Columbus Telegram
Assignment Editor
1254 27th Ave.
Columbus, NE 68601
Phone: (402) 564-2741

Fremont Tribune
Assignment Editor
135 N. Main St.
Fremont, NE 68025
Phone: (402) 721-5000

The Grand Island Independent
Mike Bockoven
Medical/Health Reporter
422 W. 1st St.
Grand Island, NE 68801
Phone: (308) 381-9439

The Hastings Tribune
Assignment Editor
908 W. 2nd St.
Hastings, NE 68901
Phone: (402) 462-2131

Kearney Hub
Carol Fettin
Medical/Health Reporter
13 E. 22nd St.
Kearney, NE 68847
Phone: (308) 237-2152

Lincoln Journal Star
Colleen Kenney
Community News Reporter
926 P St.
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 473-2655

Norfolk Daily News
Kent Warneke
Medical/Health Editor
525 Norfolk Ave.
Norfolk, NE 68701
Phone: (402) 371-1020

The North Platte Telegraph
Assignment Editor
621 N. Chestnut St.
North Platte, NE 69101
Phone: (308) 532-6000

Omaha World-Herald
Shannon Henson
Community News Reporter
1334 Dodge St.
Omaha, NE 68102
Phone: (402) 444-1248

Star-Herald
Maunette Loeks
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1405 Broadway
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