



MISSOURI

Missouri received \$1,038,523 in federal funding for abstinence-only-until-marriage programs in Fiscal Year 2004.¹

Missouri Sexuality Education Law

Missouri law does not mandate sexuality education; however, in order to be accredited, school districts must teach HIV/AIDS-prevention education in elementary and middle school.

All instruction in human sexuality must be medically and factually accurate. It must also “present abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred choice of behavior in relation to all sexual activity for unmarried pupils because it is the only method that is one hundred percent effective in preventing pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases [STDs] and the emotional trauma associated with adolescent sexual activity, and advise students that teenage sexual activity places them at a higher risk of dropping out of school because of the consequences of sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancy.”

Instruction must also include the success and failure rates of all methods of contraception, emphasize adoption, and teach students not to make “unwanted physical and verbal sexual advances or otherwise exploit another person.”

School boards must determine the specific content of sexuality education classes and make sure that it is age-appropriate. The school district must also notify parents and guardians about:

- The basic content of the district’s human sexuality instruction to be provided to the student; and
- The parent’s right to remove the student from any part of the district’s human sexuality instruction. (This is referred to as an “opt-out” policy.)

See Missouri Revised Statute 170.015, and Missouri’s *HIV Prevention Education Program*.²

Recent Legislation

Bill Would Prohibit Any Provider of Abortion Services from Providing Sex Education
Senate Bill 198; introduced in January 2005 and referred to the Committee on Judiciary, Civil, and Criminal Jurisprudence; would prohibit any person who performs, induces, assists with, encourages, or refers people to abortion services from teaching sex education. The bill provides an exemption, however, if the abortion is necessary to save the “life of the mother.”

Events of Note

ACLU Sues Missouri High School for Censoring Gay Student November 2004; Webb City, MO

The ACLU filed a lawsuit in federal court on November 23, 2004 against the Webb City School District in Missouri after the school sent a 16-year-old student home for wearing a shirt with a gay pride message. The lawsuit charges that the school violated the student's constitutional right to free expression.

The student's shirt represented the Gay-Straight Alliance at his former high school in Fayetteville, AR. The front side of the shirt displayed the group's name. A pink triangle, two male symbols, two female symbols, a male and female symbol, and the slogan "make a Difference!" all appeared on the back of the shirt. Though the student said he had worn the shirt several times before without incident, he was sent to the principal's office in October after his homeroom teacher noticed the shirt. The principal said the shirt was inappropriate and might offend other students. He instructed the student to turn the shirt inside out or go home and change. The student instead traded shirts with a friend, who wore the t-shirt the rest of the day without incident.

One week later, a similar incident occurred when the student wore a homemade t-shirt with a rainbow and the words: "I'm Gay and I'm Proud!" Within 10 minutes, the student said, he was approached by school officials and told he must turn his shirt inside out or leave. The student left school and was briefly suspended. The student returned to school several days later after promising not to wear gay-themed t-shirts until the issue had been resolved.

On advice from a teacher at his former school, the student contacted the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union). The group sent a letter to school officials in late October asking them to add a provision to the school district's policy that would clarify that students would not be punished for expressing their political views unless it would cause a disruption in the classroom. The superintendent said that he was not going to tell the school board to comply with the demands the ACLU put forth at that time explaining, "if disruption comes for whatever reason, you try to bridle that."³ He also pointed out that the school dress code includes a line that specifies clothes must not be "disruptive, distracting or inappropriate for the classroom."⁴

The student explained the lawsuit saying, "because I'm gay, my school is trying to take away my constitutional right as an American to express myself....The school lets other students wear anti-gay t-shirts, and I understand that they have a right to do that. I just want the same right."⁵

Transgender Chaperone on School Field Trip Causes Concern January 2003; St. Louis, MO

In October 2002, a parent complained to the school board after a fourth-grade field trip to the state capital during which a transgender parent of a student served as a chaperone. While none of the students or teachers commented on this, the parent, also a chaperone, was upset. Word spread about the incident, and several parents spoke at a November 2002 school board meeting demanding that the school board look into the issue. The parents asked that the board create guidelines for conduct and dress for chaperones on field trips and school parties as well as for volunteers at the schools. One board member agreed and said, "I don't think it's fair to the kids or to the parents. Parents have a right to make the decision about how their children are to be exposed to these issues."⁶

Despite criticism from some community members, the school board voted in mid-January 2003 not to change its policies. One parent who was unhappy with the decision exclaimed, "it

really is amazing what some of you have come to consider normal.”⁷ However, another community member said that those who objected to the chaperone’s dress were only a small minority in the community. He said that “the reality is that there was no problem on the field trip. The children were never in any danger and did not even question this parent’s gender. To them, she was simply another parent.”⁸

Missouri’s Youth: Statistical Information of Note⁹

- In 2003, 53% of female high school students and 52% of male high school students in Missouri 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 Missouri 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, 15% of female high school students and 18% of male high school students in Missouri 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, 42% of female high school students and 35% of male high school students in Missouri reported being currently sexually active (defined as having had sexual 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, 22% of females and 33% of males in Missouri 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, 57% of females and 79% of males in Missouri 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, 31% of females and 17% of males in Missouri 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 2% of male high school students in Missouri 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, 92% of high school students in Missouri reported having been taught about HIV/AIDS in school compared to 88% of high school students nationwide.

- In 2000, Missouri's abortion rate was 14 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen abortion rate of 24 per 1,000 nationwide.¹⁰
- In 2003, women ages 15-19 accounted for 16% of 12,476 total abortions performed in Missouri.¹¹
- In 2002, Missouri's birth rate was 44 per 1,000 women ages 15-19 compared to a teen birth rate of 43 per 1,000 nationwide.¹²

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Funding

Missouri received \$904,531 in federal Title V funding in Fiscal Year 2004. 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. Missouri sub-grantees make up the state's required match through funding and in-kind services. The Missouri Department of Health oversees this funding.

There are 17 sub-grantees, many of whom are county health departments or school districts. All sub-grantees conduct classroom-based instruction and must use one of these approved curricula: *Abstinence by Choice*, *Choosing the Best*, *Community of Caring*, *Removing the Risk*, *Sex Can Wait*, and *Teen Outreach Program (TOP)*. These sub-grantees focus on youth ages 10-17. Each sub-grantee must also include at least one activity that encourages family-child communication.

SIECUS reviewed *Choosing the Best LIFE* and found that it names numerous physical and psychological consequences of premarital sexual activity, suggests that sexually active teens will never have a happy future, and implies that only teens with low self-esteem and poor judgment become sexually active. For example, *Choosing the Best LIFE* states: "relationships often lower the self-respect of both partners—one feeling used, the other feeling like the user. Emotional pain can cause a downward spiral leading to intense feelings of lack of worthlessness."¹³

Title V Evaluation

Missouri evaluated *Life's Walk*, its Title V abstinence-only-until-marriage program during the 1999-2000 academic year. The evaluation involved pre- and post-test surveys and a small comparison group of students. No statistically significant differences were found between the comparison group and the students who participated in *Life's Walk* with respect to reported sexual behavior.¹⁴ There was, however, a significant increase in sexual behavior between pre- to post-test among all students. The authors of the evaluation concluded that "these results confirmed previous research that found no evidence that abstinence-only programs change adolescent sexual behavior."¹⁵

Missouri's evaluation was reviewed by Advocates for Youth (AFY) in its 2004 report *Five Years of Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Education: Assessing the Impact*. In its review, AFY found that the abstinence-only-until-marriage program, *Life's Walk*, which was implemented in the public schools and served eighth and tenth grade students, had little influence on young people's sexual behavior.¹⁶

Special Projects of Regional and National Significance–Community–Based Abstinence Education (SPRANS–CBAE)¹⁷ and Adolescent Family Life Act (AFLA) Grantees

There is one SPRANS–CBAE grantee in Missouri: Catholic Charities of Kansas City/St. Joseph’s Children and Family Services. There are no AFLA grantees in Missouri.

Catholic Charities of Kansas City/St. Joseph’s Children and Family Services use the *Choosing the Best LIFE* curriculum for high school students and the *Choosing the Best PATH* curriculum for middle school students.

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SIECUS also reviewed *Choosing the Best PATH* and found that it provides endless information on the negative consequences of premarital sexual activity and utilizes a variety of tactics to suggest that teens should feel guilty, embarrassed, and ashamed of sexual behavior. For example, *Choosing the Best PATH* states “couples who use condoms for birth control experience a first-year failure rate of about 15 % in preventing pregnancies. This means that over a period of five years, there could be a 50% chance or higher of getting pregnant with condoms used as the birth control method.”¹⁹ One exercise from *Choosing the Best PATH*, entitled “A Mint for Marriage,” is clearly based on shame:

A peppermint patty is unwrapped and passed around the class. Once returned, the teacher asks if a student would like to eat it. The teacher is instructed to ask, “why is this patty no longer appealing?” The answer they give is “no one wants food that has been passed around. Neither would you want your future husband or wife to have been passed around.”²⁰

Choosing the Best PATH and *Choosing the Best LIFE* were also reviewed by U.S. Representative Henry Waxman in his report *The Content of Federally Funded Abstinence-Only Education Programs* and they were found to have “major errors and distortions of public health information.”²¹

Federal and State Funding for Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Programs in FY 2004²²

Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Program Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS–CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Missouri Department of Health www.health.state.mo.us	\$904,531 federal	Title V

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Program Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS–CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
Carr Square Tenant Management Corporation stlouis.missouri.org/carrsquare/csvillag.htm		Title V sub-grantee
Cass County CHART		Title V sub-grantee
Clay County Public Health Center www.clayhealth.com		Title V sub-grantee
Dent County Health Department		Title V sub-grantee
Jennings School District High www.jenningsk12.net		Title V sub-grantee
Kansas City Public School Manual Tech		Title V sub-grantee
Laclede County Pregnancy Support Center www.psclebanon.org		Title V sub-grantee
Life Choices of Joplin		Title V sub-grantee
Lutheran Family and Children’s Services www.lfcsmo.org		Title V sub-grantee
Northside Community Center		Title V sub-grantee
People’s Health Center		Title V sub-grantee
Saint Louis Connect Care		Title V sub-grantee
Saint Louis County Health Department		Title V sub-grantee

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Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Program Grantee Length of Grant	Amount of Grant	Type of Grant (includes SPRANS–CBAE, Title V, and AFLA)
The Women’s Clinic of Kansas City		Title V sub-grantee
Thomas Business Enterprises		Title V sub-grantee
University of Missouri		Title V sub-grantee
Youth Life-Taney County		Title V sub-grantee
Catholic Charities of Kansas City/ St. Joseph 2002-2005 www.catholiccharities-kcsj.org	\$133,992	SPRANS–CBAE (Implementation Grant)

Title V Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Coordinator

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Missouri Organizations that Support Comprehensive Sexuality Education

American Civil Liberties Union of Eastern Missouri
4557 Laclede Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63108
Phone: (314) 361-2111
www.aclu-em.org

American Civil Liberties Union of the Ozarks
3601 Main St.
Kansas City, MO 64111
Phone: (816) 756-3113
www.acluoark.org

American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas and Western Missouri
3601 Main St.
Kansas City, MO 64111
Phone: (816) 756-3113
www.aclukswo.org

Lesbian and Gay Community Center
207 Westport Rd., Suite 210-218
Kansas City, MO 64111
Phone: (816) 931-4420
www.lgcc-kc.org

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Missouri Alliance for Choice
1010 Vine St.
Fulton, MO 65251
Phone: (573) 445-8075

Missouri Religious Coalition for
Reproductive Choice
5000 Washington Pl.
St. Louis, MO 63108
Phone: (314) 361-9600
www.morcrc.org

NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri
4144 Lindell, Suite 505
St. Louis, MO 63108
Phone: (314) 531-8616
www.monaral.org

Planned Parenthood Advocates Kansas and
Mid-Missouri
4401 West 109th St., Suite 200
Overland Park, KS 66211
Phone: (913) 312-5100
www.ppkkm.org

Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis
Region Advocates
4251 Forest Park Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63108
Phone: (314) 531-7526
www.ppslr.org

PROMO: for the Personal Rights of
Missourians
438 N. Skinker Blvd.
Saint Louis, MO 63130
Phone: (314) 862-4900
www.promoonline.org

Missouri Organizations that Oppose Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Eagle Forum Education Center
PO Box 618
Alton, IL 62002
Phone: (618) 462-5415
www.eagleforum.org

Life's Silver Lining
PO Box 971
Florissant, MO 63032
Phone: (314) 921-7762
www.lifessilverlinings.com

Missouri Right to Life
621 East McCarty, Suite A
PO Box 651
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Phone: (573) 635-5110
www.missourilife.org

The Women's Clinic of Kansas City
815 N. Noland Rd., Suite 4&5
Independence, MO 64050
Phone: (816) 836-9000
www.thewomensclinic.net

Newspapers in Missouri

The Branson Tri-Lakes Daily News
Chris Wolf
Community News Reporter
200 Industrial Park Dr.
Hollister, MO 65672
Phone: (417) 334-3161

Columbia Daily Tribune
Andy Waters
Medical/Health Editor
101 N. 4th St.
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Daily American Republic

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The Joplin Globe

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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 2004 begins on October 1, 2003 and ends on September 30, 2004.

² *HIV Prevention Education Program* (Jefferson City, MO: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 23 July 2002), accessed 28 January 2005, <<http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divimprove/curriculum/hiveducation/msipeducation.html>>.

³ Steve Rock, "Student's T-Shirts Kindle Gay Rights Conflict," *The Kansas City Star*, 5 November 2004, accessed on Lexis-Nexis, 8 January 2005.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ S. Simon, "Cross-dressed Dad Sparks a Tumult after School Trip," *The Record*, January 6, 2003.

⁷ Associated Press, "Despite Cross-dressing Flap School Won't Change Rules for Parents," (MO), January 17, 2003.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ 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/yrbbs/>>.

¹⁰ *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall Trends, Trends by Race and Ethnicity and State-by-State Information* (New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute, February, 2004), accessed 28 January 2005, <www.guttmacher.org>.

¹¹ *Missouri Vital Statistics 2003* (Jefferson City: Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, 2004), Table 13, accessed 8 February 2005, <<http://www.dhss.mo.gov/VitalStatistics/MVS03/Preface.pdf>>.

¹² *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>>.

¹³ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best LIFE-Student Workbook* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000), 9.

¹⁴ Jerrold Barnett and Cynthia Hurst. "Abstinence education for rural youth: an evaluation of the *Life's Walk* program," *Journal of School Health* 73.3, (September 2003): 264-268.

¹⁵ Ibid, 267.

¹⁶ Debra Hauser, *Five Years of Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Education: Assessing the Impact* (Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, 2004), 13.

¹⁷ In FY 2004 SPRANS-CBAE was administered within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. In FY 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).

¹⁸ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best LIFE-Student Workbook*, 9.

¹⁹ Bruce Cook, *Choosing the Best PATH-Leader Guide* (Marietta, GA: Choosing the Best Inc., 2000), 18.

²⁰ *Choosing the Best PATH, Leader Guide*, 25.

²¹ *The Content of Federally Funded Abstinence-Only Education Programs*, prepared for Representative Henry A. Waxman, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Government Reform—Minority Staff Special Investigations Division (December 2004), accessed 10 December 2004,

<<http://www.democrats.reform.house.gov/Documents/20041201102153-50247.pdf>>.

²² SIECUS was unable to obtain exact funding amounts for all grantees.