



The *Healthy Teens Act* ensures that Connecticut's youth have access to medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education providing them with the necessary skills to make safe and responsible choices surrounding their sexual health.

Few Connecticut students get comprehensive, age-appropriate, medically accurate information about sexual health before they become sexually active.¹

- 70% (7,665) of reported Chlamydia cases in CT in 2006 were among young people aged 10-24. Left untreated, Chlamydia is a major contributor to infertility later in life. 55% (1,463) of reported Gonorrhea cases in CT in 2006 were among young people aged 10-24.²
- The CT Department of Public Health reported the percentage of state births to teens was 6.9% in 2004. However, the rate is significantly higher in Hartford (20%), New Britain (16%), Windham (15.4%), New London (14%), New Haven (13.6%), Killingly (13.6%), Bridgeport (13.2%), Norwich (12.5%), and Putnam (9.9%).
- Teens and young adults under the age of 25 continue to be at risk for HIV and most young people are infected through unprotected sex³. African Americans are disproportionately affected by HIV infection; accounting for 55% of all HIV infections reported among persons aged 13–24⁴. The lifetime per person HIV care cost is now \$618,900.⁵
- An estimated 80,000 CT high school students report they have had sexual intercourse and nearly 80% first had sexual intercourse between the ages of 13 and 16.⁶

Many parents don't talk with their children about sex, because they are uncomfortable, don't know what to say, and mistakenly think that schools are doing the job⁷. However, **Connecticut has no designated funding stream for comprehensive sexuality education in schools.**

- 94 percent of Connecticut residents agree that, "In the era of AIDS, young people need information and skills from sex education to protect their health and lives."⁸
- Over \$1 million of federal funded Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) comes into CT each year via two Community Based Organizations. Nationally, since CBAE began in 2001 it has increased over 450% to a total expenditure level of \$113 million.⁹
- Research shows that teenagers who receive sex education that includes discussions on contraception are more likely than those who receive abstinence-only messages to delay sexual activity and to use contraceptives and condoms when they do become sexually active. In addition, the overwhelming weight of scientific evidence suggests that addressing abstinence and contraception does not increase sexual activity.¹⁰
- Research has shown that comprehensive sexuality education programs result in consistent condom use among teenagers who are sexually active.^{11,12,13} This is particularly important considering 64% of sexually active teenagers in CT didn't use condoms the last time they had sex.⁶
- A recent study of four abstinence education programs, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., found that the programs had no effect on the sexual abstinence of youth.¹⁴ A recent Congressional review found that 80% of the most popular abstinence-only curricula contain false or misleading information about reproductive health.¹⁵ Studies have also determined that abstinence-only-until-marriage programs actually increase risks of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections by discouraging contraceptive use.

The Healthy Teens Coalition is comprised of advocates seeking to offer medically accurate, age-appropriate sex education in Connecticut schools. Members are listed on the reverse side of this fact sheet. www.healthyteensct.org

Healthy Teens Coalition Members:

- AIDS Life Campaign
- AIDS Project Hartford
- American Academy of Pediatrics, CT Chapter
- American Association of University Women, CT
- Central Area Health Education Center
- City of New Haven
- CT AIDS Resource Coalition (CARC)
- CT Association of School Based Health Centers
- CT Conference of the United Church of Christ
- CT Public Health Association
- CT Sexual Assault Crisis Services (CONNSACS)
- CT Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF)
- CT Women's Health Campaign
- Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) of CT
- Greater New Haven P-FLAG
- Hartford Action Plan, Breaking the Cycle Campaign
- Health Education Department, University of Connecticut
- Nancy A. Humphries Institute for Political Social Work
- National Association of Social Workers, CT chapter
- National Council of Jewish Women, CT
- NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut
- New Haven Home Recovery
- OB-GYN Section, Department of Surgical Services, Bristol Hospital
- P-FLAG, Hartford
- Planned Parenthood of CT
- Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice of CT
- Restoration Temple Deliverance Mission Churches, Inc.
- True Colors
- Windham Regional Community Council

For the most up to date list of Healthy Teens Coalition Members visit: <http://www.healthyteensct.org/>

The following medical and public health professional organizations solidly endorse providing comprehensive sex education that offers information about a range of sexual health and contraceptive options, including, but not limited to, abstinence for teenagers in their schools.^{16,17,18,19}

- The American Medical Association
- The American Academy of Pediatrics
- The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists
- The American Public Health Association
- The American Psychological Association
- United States Surgeon General

¹ APCO Insight & Advocates for Youth. Connecticut Sexuality Education Survey: Survey among Connecticut Residents. Washington, DC: Authors, January, 2004.

² State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, 2006

³ Slide Set: HIV/AIDS Surveillance in Adolescents and Young Adults (through 2005).

⁴ CDC. [HIV Prevention in the Third Decade](#). Atlanta: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC; 2005.

⁵ Schackman, B. Medical Care, November 2006; vol 44: pp 990-997. News release, Weill Medical College of Cornell University. Bruce R. Schackman, PhD, chief, division of health policy, Weill Cornell Medical College.

⁶ State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health, Connecticut School Health Survey (2005)

⁷ National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, Sexual Behavior of Young Adolescents, 2003

⁸ APCO Insight & Advocates for Youth. Connecticut Sexuality Education Survey: Survey among Connecticut Residents. Washington, DC: Authors, January, 2004.

⁹ SIECUS, Public Policy Office State Profile, Connecticut, 2007

¹⁰ Kirby D (2001), Emerging Answers: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy, Washington, DC: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

¹¹ Starkman N, Rajani N. The case for comprehensive sex education. AIDS Patient Care and STDs. 2002;16(7):313-318.

¹² Kirby D. What does the research say about sexuality education? Education Leadership. 2000;58(2):72-76.

¹³ Jemmott J, Jemmott L, Fong G. Abstinence and Safer Sex HIV Risk-Reduction Interventions for African American Adolescents: A Randomized Controlled Trial. JAMA. 1998;279(19):1529-1536.

¹⁴ ["Impacts of Four Title V, Section 510 Abstinence Education Programs."](#) by Christopher Trenholm, Barbara Devaney, Ken Forston, Lisa Quay, Justin Wheeler, and Melissa Clark

¹⁵ The Content of Federally Funded Abstinence-Only Education Programs prepared for Rep. Henry Waxman, United States House of Representatives, Committee on Government Reform, December 2004, page i.

¹⁶ Silva M. The effectiveness of school-based sex education programs in the promotion of abstinent behavior: a meta analysis. Health Education Research. 2002;17(4):471-481.

¹⁷ Siecus Public Policy Office. In Good Company: Who Supports Comprehensive Sexuality Education? Available at: http://www.siecus.org/policy/in_good_company.pdf. Accessed February 3, 2005.

¹⁸ Abstinence, monogamy, and sex [Editorial]. The Lancet. 2002;360(9327):97.

¹⁹ Wetzstein C. AMA revises sex-ed policy. Washington Times, 2004.