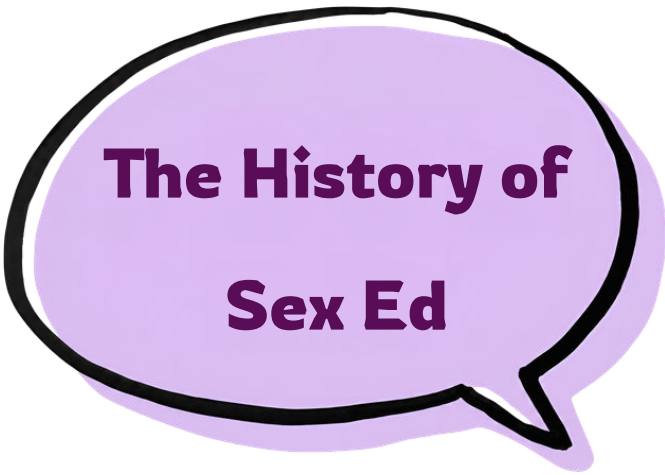




educateUS
CHANGING SEX ED FOR GOOD

EducateUS Zine Library
Volume I

A light purple speech bubble with a thick black outline and a drop shadow, containing the title text.

The History of Sex Ed

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Designed by
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Remember your high school sex ed class? Whether it was a full semester of real info or one awkward day with a banana and a condom, none of it happened by accident. Everything you were or weren't taught got fought over for decades by politicians, religious groups, doctors, and activists.

Here's the actual story.

It kicked off in the early 1900s with the Social Hygiene movement. Public health officials were mostly worried about soldiers catching STIs and people "behaving immorally," which, back then, even meant masturbation. No talk of relationships, consent, or actual well-being. Just shame and abstinence.

Cut to the 60s and 70s. The sexual revolution changes everything culturally, and people start realizing kids need more than nothing. In 1964, Dr. Mary Calderone, a doctor working with Planned Parenthood, started SIECUS to push for real, accurate sex ed. In 1975, the World Health Organization redefined sexual health as physical, emotional, and social well-being, not just the absence of disease. Progress, for a minute.

Then, the 80s hit, and things swing hard the other way. In 1981, Congress passed the Adolescent Family Life Act, nicknamed the Chastity Law, funding abstinence and self-discipline programs, a lot of it through religious organizations. Civil liberties groups sue the Reagan administration, arguing the government is basically funding religion in public schools.

The 90s bring whiplash. In 1990 and 1991, SIECUS published the first national guidelines for comprehensive sex ed, covering anatomy, contraception, STIs, and sexual orientation. Then in 1996, Congress attached a provision to welfare reform creating a federal program for abstinence-only propaganda in public schools. Programs couldn't even mention contraception except to talk about how it fails. Hundreds of millions of dollars fund this for the next decade.

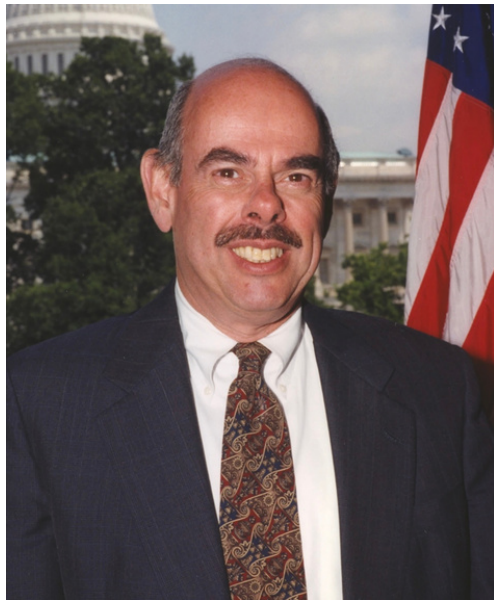
The 2000s are when the receipts come in. In 2004, Representative Henry Waxman released a report showing federally funded abstinence-only curricula were full of scientific inaccuracies and religious messaging.

In 2007, a federal study led by Christopher Trenholm found abstinence-only programs don't delay sex, don't reduce partner counts, and don't change high-risk behavior. That same year, researcher Douglas Kirby reviewed over a hundred studies and reached the same conclusion: abstinence-only just doesn't work.

Policy starts catching up after that. In 2009, Obama redirects funding toward evidence-based programs, launching two federal initiatives that finally include real contraception education. In 2012, official National Sexuality Education Standards were published for kindergarten through high school. In 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics formally recommended comprehensive, school-based sex ed covering both pregnancy and STI prevention.



A sex ed class in the early 1900s.



Former CA Rep.
Henry Waxman
(served 1975-2015).



Mary Calderone,
founder of SIECUS.

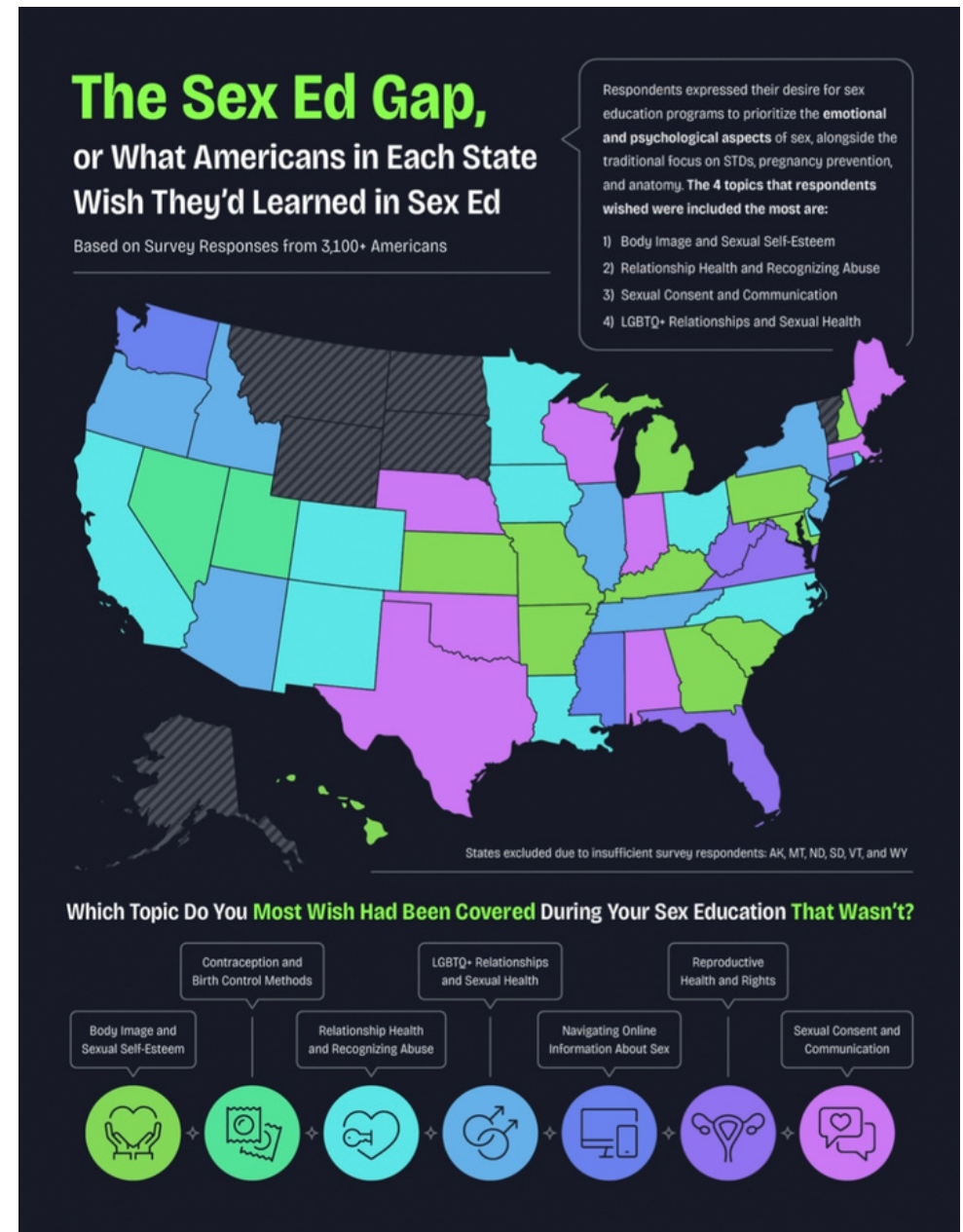


Image and data from “The
Talk” survey by SIECUS, 2024.

“(Q) such other services consistent with the purposes of this title as the Secretary may approve in accordance with regulations promulgated by the Secretary;

“(5) ‘core services’ means those services which shall be provided by a grantee, as determined by the Secretary by regulation;

“(6) ‘supplemental services’ means those services which may be provided by a grantee, as determined by the Secretary by regulation;

“(7) ‘care services’ means necessary services for the provision of care to pregnant adolescents and adolescent parents and includes all core services with respect to the provision of such care prescribed by the Secretary by regulation;

“(8) ‘prevention services’ means necessary services to prevent adolescent sexual relations, including the services described in subparagraphs (A), (D), (E), (G), (H), (M), (N), (O), and (Q) of paragraph (4);

“(9) ‘adolescent’ means an individual under the age of nineteen; and

“(10) ‘unemancipated minor’ means a minor who is subject to the control, authority, and supervision of his or her parents or guardians, as determined under State law.

“(b) Until such time as the Secretary promulgates regulations pursuant to the second sentence of this subsection, the Secretary shall use the regulations promulgated under title VI of the Health Services and Centers Amendments of 1978 which were in effect on the date of enactment of this title, to determine which necessary services are core services for purposes of this title. The Secretary may promulgate regulations to determine which necessary services are core services for purposes of this title based upon an evaluation of and information concerning which necessary services are essential to carry out the purposes of this title and taking into account (1) factors such as whether services are to be provided in urban or rural areas, the ethnic groups to be served, and the nature of the populations to be served, and (2) the results of the evaluations required under section 2006(b). The Secretary may from time to time revise such regulations.

“AUTHORITY TO MAKE GRANTS FOR DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

“SEC. 2003. (a) The Secretary may make grants to further the purposes of this title to eligible grant recipients which have submitted an application which the Secretary finds meets the requirements of section 2006 for demonstration projects which the Secretary determines will help communities provide appropriate care and prevention services in easily accessible locations. Demonstration projects shall, as appropriate, provide, supplement, or improve the quality of such services. Demonstration projects shall use such methods as will strengthen the capacity of families to deal with the sexual behavior, pregnancy, or parenthood of adolescents and to make use of support systems such as other family members, friends, religious and charitable organizations, and voluntary associations.

“(b) Grants under this title for demonstration projects may be for the provision of—

“(1) care services;

“(2) prevention services; or

“(3) a combination of care services and prevention services.

42 USC 300a-21.

42 USC 300z-2.

The Adolescent Family Life Act of 1981

Impacts of Four Title V, Report by Christopher Trenholm.

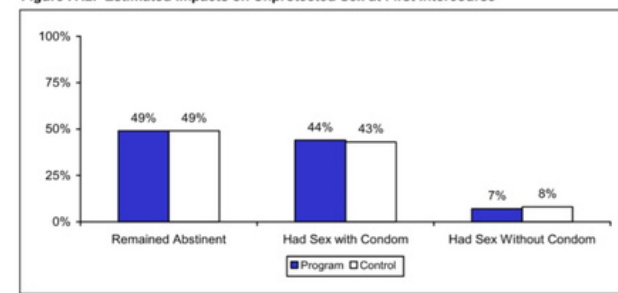
April 12, 2007

from sex until marriage compared with 33 percent of corresponding control group youth—a statistically significant difference of ten percentage points (p -value = 0.04). However, on the two other expectations measures, through high school and as teenagers, *FUPTP* displays no statistically significant impacts. In fact, the estimated impacts are not positive (-4 and 0, respectively). Findings for a second program, *ReCapturing the Vision*, are not statistically significant but the estimated impacts are somewhat large. On the marriage measure, for example, 41 percent of program group in *ReCapturing the Vision* reported that they would abstain until marriage compared to 34 percent of control group youth. The difference, seven percentage points, is not statistically significant (p -value = 0.13).

► Program group youth were no more likely than control group youth to have unprotected sex.

Eight percent of all control group youth and seven percent of all program group youth reported having had sexual intercourse and not using a condom the first time (Figure IV.2). There are similarly no differences when measured over the last 12 months—17 percent of youth in both groups reported having had sex in the last 12 months and using a condom only sometimes, and 4 percent reported having had sex in the last 12 months and never using a condom. (Figure IV.3). For all youth, this latter result is equivalent to about half of

Figure IV.2. Estimated Impacts on Unprotected Sex at First Intercourse



Source: Wave 4 Survey of Teen Activities and Attitudes (Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 2005), administered to youth 42 to 78 months after enrolling in the Title V, Section 510 Abstinence Education Program study sample.

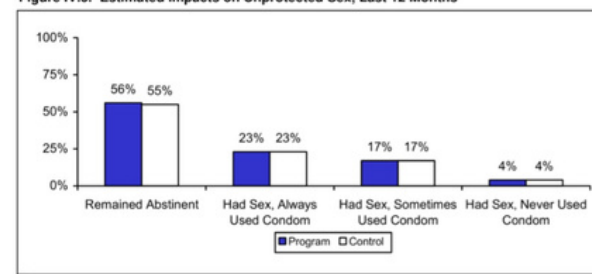
Note: All estimates are based on weighted regression models. For details on the covariates, see Appendix Table A.1. Sample sizes and R-square statistics are in Appendix Tables A.2 and A.3, respectively. Findings by site, as well as F-tests of the difference in the distribution of the outcome measure between control and program groups, are in Appendix Table A.5.

*** p -value (of program-control difference) < 0.01; ** p -value < 0.05; * p -value < 0.10, two-tailed test.

Chapter IV: Impacts on Sexual Abstinence
and Teen Risk Behaviors

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Figure IV.3. Estimated Impacts on Unprotected Sex, Last 12 Months



Source: Wave 4 Survey of Teen Activities and Attitudes (Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 2005), administered to youth 42 to 78 months after enrolling in the Title V, Section 510 Abstinence Education Program study sample.

Note: All estimates are based on weighted regression models. For details on the covariates, see Appendix Table A.1. Sample sizes and R-square statistics are in Appendix Tables A.2 and A.3, respectively. Findings by site, as well as F-tests of the difference in the distribution of the outcome measure between control and program groups, are in Appendix Table A.6.

*** p -value (of program-control difference) < 0.01; ** p -value < 0.05; * p -value < 0.10, two-tailed test.

SO, WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Over 95 percent of parents want schools teaching healthy relationships, STIs, contraception, and abstinence. Everyone basically agrees

But only about 20 states actually require any sex or HIV ed at all. Fewer require birth control info. Even fewer require any of it to be medically accurate.

Interested in learning more about the effects of policy? Check out **issue II** of this zine!



It's always been a tug-of-war between science and politics, and it still is.

Whether you get real information or a fear-based lecture comes down to something as random as your zip code. Sex ed in America has never yet been about what's really true...

So it's up to us to do something about this. There are so many things you can do to make the future of sex ed better than the past! Flip to the next page to find our recommendations.

Take Action!



EducateUS makes it easy to send your school board a sex ed guide. No phone calls, just a one-click email!



Want to teach your friends about school board elections? We've got a resource kit for you!



Want to go a step further? You could host a town hall with your friends and invite your school board using the YAB's Town Hall Guide:

