

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

**Fact Sheet
HB 2544**

Background

Currently Arizona has the nation's second highest teen pregnancy rate. Arizona's youth are at a higher risk than the nationwide average for pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV. Comprehensive Sexuality Education and access to contraceptive services can help young people protect their health and well being.

In 1996, the federal government began funding states, including Arizona, to begin teaching abstinence only until marriage promotion in schools. Arizona schools overwhelmingly promote abstinence to our youth; and have appropriated millions of dollars in state funds to support these dangerous and ineffective programs which according to several recent studies, do not work.ⁱ

Comprehensive is defined as: evidence-based programs that start in kindergarten and continue through 12th grade. These programs will include age-appropriate, medically accurate information on a broad set of topics related to sexuality, including human development, relationships, decision-making, abstinence, contraception and disease prevention. They will provide students with opportunities for developing skills as well as learning information.

Arizona's youth population is at a higher than average risk for unsafe sex

- 46% of Arizona high school students report being sexually active.ⁱⁱ
- Among those who reported being sexually active, 55% of Arizona youth reported using a condom during their last sexual encounter, this is significantly lower than the nationwide average of 68%. Of those surveyed, 15% reported using birth control pills.^{iii iv}
- Almost 84,000 Arizona young women ages 13 – 19 have expressed a need for publically funded contraceptive services and supplies.^v
- One out of four sexually active youth has contracted a STI.
- 23.4% of sexually active students used alcohol or drugs the last time they had sex.^{vi}
- 12% of female high school students were forced to have sex when they did not want to.^{vii}

Teens and STIs

- In 2007 there were 14,472 cases of Chlamydia, 3,161 cases of Gonorrhea and 814 cases of Syphilis reported in Maricopa County. Through the first six months of 2008, there has been an 18% increase in Syphilis cases compared to 2007.^{viii}

- Youth ages 15 – 24 experience more than half of all the Gonorrhea and Chlamydia cases in Arizona.^{ix}
- 50% of new HIV infections occur in people under age 25.^x

Teen Pregnancy

- More than 40 teens become pregnant in Arizona every day; a total of 14,713 last year.^{xi}
- Arizona has the nation's second highest teen pregnancy rate^{xii} Mexico/Latina teens are more than two times as likely to become pregnant as Caucasian teens, and nearly four times as likely to give birth.
- Arizona has one of the highest school dropout rates in the nation. The number one reason girls drop out is teen pregnancy^{xiii}
- 95% of all teen pregnancies are unplanned^{xiv}
- 84% of Arizona teens giving birth were unmarried^{xv}

Teen Pregnancy and Poverty

- 52% of all mothers on welfare had their first child as a teenager.^{xvi}
- A child's chance of growing up in poverty is 27% higher if, the mother gives birth as a teen.^{xvii}
- The decrease of unplanned pregnancies could result in fewer children living in poverty. According to a study, conducted by Center for Law and Social Policy, the child poverty rate in the state of Arizona 2006 was at 20.3%^{xviii}
- Compared to teens from higher income families, poor and low-income teens are more likely to be sexually active and less likely to use contraceptives or to use contraception successfully. Poor and low-income adolescents make up 38 percent of all women ages 15 to 19; yet, they account for 73 percent of all pregnancies in that age group.^{xix}
- The cost to the United States associated with childhood poverty total about \$500 billion per year.^{xx}

Prevention is fiscal common sense

- On average, a child who spends most of childhood in poverty will make, as an adult, 39% less than the median yearly earnings; contributing to an over slowing in GDP.^{xxi}
- 82% of teen births were paid for by government funds; the Arizona taxpayer cost for teen childbearing in 2004 was \$268 Million or \$3,822 per teen^{xxii}

- The teen birth rate in Arizona has declined 23% between 1991 and 2003. This progress in reducing teen pregnancy has result an estimated savings of \$76 million in 2004 alone.^{xxiii}
- Sons born to adolescent mothers are 2.2 times more likely to be incarcerated.^{xxiv}

States that implement a more comprehensive approach have seen a significant decrease in teen birth rates.

- In Virginia, sexuality education must cover both abstinence and information about contraceptives. From 2000 to 2006 Virginia teen birth rates decreased 8.5%.^{xxv}
- Rhode Island’s sexuality education programs have an emphasis on abstinence but include medically accurate information about contraceptives as well. In 2006 the state was one of only a handful in the country to see a significant decrease (11%) in teen pregnancy from the previous year.^{xxvi}

ⁱ Hauser D. Five Years of Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Education: Assessing the Impact. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth. 2004. <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/PUBLICATIONS/stateevaluations.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2008). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2007. Surveillance Summaries, June 4, 2008. MMWR; 57(SS-4); Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System. Youth Online: Comprehensive Results. 2007. <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/yrbss/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Arizona Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Program. “2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results: Arizona High Schools Survey.” <http://www.azrapevention.org/statistics/2005AZYRBSa/2005YRBSTrendReport.pdf>

^{iv} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2005. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report 2006; 55(SS-5); 1 – 108.

^v Guttmacher Institute. “Contraception Counts: Arizona” http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/state_data/states/arizona.html

^{vi} Arizona Youth Risk Behavior Survey; Arizona Dept. of Education; Feb. 2006. <http://www.ade.az.gov/schooleffectiveness/health/matrix/YRBS2005Results.asp>

^{vii} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2003) Youth risk behavior surveillance summary – United States, 2003, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, May 2004, 53(2).

^{viii} Outbreak Summary Reports. Maricopa County Department of Public Health. www.maricopa.gov/Public_Health.

^{ix} Arizona Department of Health Services, Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Program. “The Impact of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea in Adolescents, 2006.” <http://www.azdhs.gov/phs/oids/pdf/STDsamongarizonayouth2006.pdf>

^x Office of National AIDS Policy. Youth and HIV/AIDS 2000: A New American Agenda. Washington, DC: White House, 2000.

^{xi} Arizona Department of Health Services. (2008). Teen Pregnancy in Arizona, Fact Sheet. http://azdhs.gov/phs/owch/pdf/teen_preg_08.pdf

^{xii} The Alan Guttmacher Institute. 2004. *U.S. Teenage Pregnancy Statistics: Overall trends, trends by race and ethnicity and state by state information.* www.guttmacher.org/pubs/state_pregnancy_trends.pdf.

^{xiii} *By the Numbers, the Public Costs of Teen Childbearing.* Nation Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 2006. www.teenpregnancy.org

^{xiv} Arizona Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting.

^{xv} Arizona Department of Health Service. Teenage Pregnancy, Arizona. 1994 – 2004.

^{xvi} Moore, K.A. et al. Data on teenage childbearing in the United States. 1993, Child Trends, Inc.: Washington, DC.

^{xvii} *National Campaign analysis of, Historical Income Tables - Households.* Nation Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 2004.

^{xviii} *Child welfare in Arizona.* 2006. http://clas.org/publications/child_welfare_in_arizona06.pdf.

^{xix} The Alan Guttmacher Institute. 1998. *Teenage Pregnancy and the Welfare Reform Debate. [Issues in Brief].*

^{xx} Holzer, Harry J. The Economic Costs of Poverty in the United States: Subsequent Effects of Children Growing Up Poor. National Poverty Center Working Paper Series #07-04. 2007. http://npc.umich.edu/publications/u/working_paper07-04.pdf.

^{xxi} The Cost of Doing Nothing. First Focus. 2008. <http://www.firstfocus.net/Download/CostNothing.pdf>.

^{xxii} *By the Numbers, the Public Costs of Teen Childbearing.* Nation Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 2006. www.teenpregnancy.org

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- ^{xxiii} *By the Numbers, the Public Costs of Teen Childbearing*. Nation Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 2006.
www.teenpregnancy.org
- ^{xxiv} *By the Numbers, the Public Costs of Teen Childbearing*. Nation Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. 2006.
www.teenpregnancy.org
- ^{xxv} *State Policies in Brief: Sex and STI/HIV Education*. The Alan Guttmacher Institute. 2009.
http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_SE.pdf
- ^{xxvi} *Births Preliminary Data for 2006*. National Center for Health Statistics. 2009.
http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr56/nvsr56_07.pdf