

MISSISSIPPI STATE PROFILE

Prepared with an interest in protecting the health and innocence of children, this profile provides an overview of sex education in Mississippi, including:

- I. Chart showing [legal requirements for sex education](#) in this state
- II. [Profile of federal funding](#) the state has been awarded for sex education
- III. Chart of federally funded [programs/curricula used in state schools](#)
- IV. Overview of the state's [sex education legislation/guidelines](#)
- V. List of [how parental rights are being undermined](#) in this state
- VI. [News articles](#) regarding sex education in the state
- VII. [Opt-out form](#) to protect your child from comprehensive sexuality education (CSE)
- VIII. Suggestions for how you can [help protect child health and stop CSE](#)
- IX. [Resources](#) for up-to-date information about sex education in this state
- X. Contact information to [connect with others](#) who are concerned about this issue.



I. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SEX EDUCATION IN MISSISSIPPI

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS	YES	NO	N/A	LEGISLATIVE CODE
Sex Education Required		X		
Sex Education Optional	X			37.31.171
If/When Provided, Sexual Education Must:				
Be Medically Accurate*	X			37.13.171(1&2)
Be Age Appropriate	X			37.13.171(1&2)
Be Evidence-based			X	
Be Culturally Appropriate and Unbiased			X	
Reference/Stress Abstinence**				37.13.171(1&2) , 37.13.171(4)
Include HIV Education	X			37.13.171(3)
Be LGBTQ Inclusive		X		37.13.171(2.b,d,e) , 37.13.171(2.f)
Include Safety Against Sexual Abuse	X			37.13.171(2.c)
Parental Role in Sexual Education:				
Parents Must be Notified	X			37.13.21
Opt-In			X	
Opt-Out Option	X			37.13.21
Abortion References: There shall be no effort in either an abstinence-only or an abstinence-plus curriculum to teach that abortion can be used to prevent the birth of a baby. Code 37-13-171(6)				

*See each state's definition of "medically accurate."

**While requirement may say "abstinence-based" or to "stress abstinence" as the standard, many CSE programs only mention abstinence in passing; they don't establish abstinence as the expected standard and fail to emphasize abstinence as the only sure way to protect against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including AIDS.

Note: This state profile has been prepared by Family Watch International and the Protect Child Health Coalition. While the information provided is as accurate as possible and is updated annually, **check the Resources listed below for any updates.** Also, **please alert us** if you are aware of any changes, proposed legislation or issues regarding CSE that may be occurring in your state by completing the contact form at StopCSE.org/mississippi or by emailing StopCSE@FamilyWatch.org.



II. MISSISSIPPI SEX EDUCATION FEDERAL FUNDING PROFILE

Federal Government Programs and Grants Awarded for Mississippi

WARNING: While grant requirements may state that curricula/programs are to be “evidence based” or “medically accurate” in order to receive funding, research shows that, often, funds go to curricula/programs that are ineffective (See SexEdReport.org). In addition, content analyses show that many programs (Link to harmful CSE elements chart) normalize teen sex, encourage sexual pleasure-seeking, condone early sexual debut and promote high-risk sexual behaviors. ***It is important to look at the actual content of every curricula rather than relying on labels assigned to them.***

DASH—Division of Adolescent and School Health, a division of the Centers for Disease Prevention (CDC), works with community partners to provide training and resource development for so-called “HIV, STD, and pregnancy prevention” programs in school-based and community settings.

- Mississippi received DASH funds totaling \$339,432 in fiscal year 2016.

PREP—The Personal Responsibility Education Programs, under the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), provides grants for sex education programs that are sometimes called “abstinence plus” programs and that focus on “both abstinence and contraception.”

- Mississippi received PREP funds totaling \$469,166 in fiscal year 2017.

SRAE—Sexual Risk Avoidance Education grants go to curricula/programs that emphasize risk avoidance and teach youth to voluntarily refrain from non-marital sexual activity and other risky behaviors. Note: See warning above.

- Mississippi received NO SRAE program funds in 2016.

Title V—The TITLE V State Abstinence Education Grant Program funds abstinence education and mentoring to promote abstinence. However, note that at least one Title V program promotes promiscuity as healthy and normal. As noted above, **it is important to look at the actual content of the curricula.**

- Mississippi received a Title V award totaling \$912,115 in fiscal year 2017.ⁱ

TPP—The **Teen Pregnancy Prevention** program, through the Office of Adolescent Health (OAH), funds comprehensive sex education programs for children aged 10 to 19. Note: Research shows that most TPP programs are ineffective at reducing pregnancy rates and some even increase risk. (See SexEdReport.org)

- Mississippi received \$2,249,999 in funding for years 2015-2019.ⁱⁱ



III. FEDERALLY FUNDED SEX EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN MISSISSIPPI

Note: Programs in **red** text have been analyzed and found to contain harmful content for children. Programs not in red may or may not have harmful content.

See examples exposing harmful content in various CSE curricula and materials at www.stopcse.org/cse-materials-index/. For example, the analysis of [Making a Difference](#), shows CSE programs sexualize children and encourage promiscuity and risky sexual behavior, typically without providing medically accurate information about the long-term risks associated with early sexual debut and experimentation.

Federally Funded Sex Education Programs / Curricula in Mississippi

FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAM OR CURRICULUM	FUNDING RECIPIENT
TPPP	Draw the Line/Respect the Line	Delta Health Alliance, Inc.
TPPP	Reducing the Risk	Delta Health Alliance, Inc.
TPPP	Promoting Health Among Teens!	Delta Health Alliance, Inc.
TPPP	Making Proud Choices!	Delta Health Alliance, Inc.
PREP	Draw the Line/Respect the Line	Mississippi State Department of Health Office of Preventative Health
PREP	Reducing the Risk	Mississippi State Department of Health Office of Preventative Health
PREP	Becoming a Responsible Teen (BART)	Mississippi State Department of Health Office of Preventative Health
PREP	Sexual Health and Adolescent Risk Prevention (SHARP)	Mississippi State Department of Health Office of Preventative Health
TITLE V	Choosing the Best	The Mississippi Department of Human Services

See stopcse.org/cse-materials-index/ for a menu of examples and analyses exposing the harmful elements to children of specific curricula and other CSE materials.



IV. OVERVIEW OF MISSISSIPPI SEX EDUCATION LEGISLATION & GUIDELINES

The following laws and guidelines apply to sex education and how sex education is taught in Mississippi.

**According to Mississippi Title 37ⁱⁱⁱ/HB 999^{iv} (as of July 2, 2018)
Code 37-13-171 (enacted 2016-2021)**

(1) The local school board of every public school district shall adopt a policy to implement abstinence-only or abstinence-plus education that is age, grade and developmentally appropriate.

(2) Abstinence-only education shall remain the state standard for any sex-related education taught in the public schools. For purposes of this section, abstinence-only education includes any type of instruction or program which, at an appropriate age and grade:

(a) Teaches the social, psychological and health gains to be realized by abstaining from sexual activity, and the likely negative psychological and physical effects of not abstaining;

(b) Teaches the harmful consequences to the child, the child's parents and society that bearing children out of wedlock is likely to produce, including the health, educational, financial and other difficulties the child and his or her parents are likely to face, as well as the inappropriateness of the social and economic burden placed on others;

(c) Teaches that unwanted sexual advances are irresponsible and teaches how to reject sexual advances and how alcohol and drug use increases vulnerability to sexual advances;

(d) Teaches that abstinence from sexual activity before marriage, and fidelity within marriage, is the only certain way to avoid out-of-wedlock pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and related health problems. The instruction or program may include a discussion on condoms or contraceptives, but only if that discussion includes a factual presentation of the risks and failure rates of those contraceptives. In no case shall the instruction or program include any demonstration of how condoms or other contraceptives are applied;

(e) Teaches the current state law related to sexual conduct, including forcible rape, statutory rape, paternity establishment, child support and homosexual activity; and

(f) Teaches that a mutually faithful, monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the only appropriate setting for sexual intercourse.

(3) A program or instruction on sex-related education need not include every component listed in subsection (2) of this section for abstinence-only education. However, no program or instruction under an abstinence-only curriculum may include anything that contradicts the excluded components. For purposes of this section, abstinence-plus education includes every component listed under subsection (2) of this section that is age and grade appropriate, in addition to any other programmatic or instructional component approved by the department, which shall not include instruction and demonstrations on the application and use of condoms. Abstinence-plus education may discuss other contraceptives, the nature, causes

and effects of sexually transmitted diseases, or the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, along with a factual presentation of the risks and failure rates.

(4) Any course containing sex-related education offered in the public schools shall include instruction in either abstinence-only or abstinence-plus education.

(5) Local school districts, in their discretion, may host programs designed to teach parents how to discuss abstinence with their children.

(6) There shall be no effort in either an abstinence-only or an abstinence-plus curriculum to teach that abortion can be used to prevent the birth of a baby.

(7) At all times when sex-related education is discussed or taught, boys and girls shall be separated according to gender into different classrooms, sex-related education instruction may not be conducted when boys and girls are in the company of any students of the opposite gender.

Code 37-13-21

Each school providing instruction or any other presentation on human sexuality in the classroom, assembly or other official setting shall be required to provide no less than one (1) week's written notice thereof to the parents of children in such programs of instruction. The written notice must inform the parents of their right to request the inclusion of their child for such instruction or presentation. The notice also must inform the parents of the right, and the appropriate process, to review the curriculum and all materials to be used in the lesson or presentation. Upon the request of any parent, the school shall excuse the parent's child from such instruction or presentation, without detriment to the student.

According to the Mississippi Department of Education

1. Curriculum and programs are based on the **Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Health and Learning Model.**^v
2. DASH^{vi} is taught and TPP^{vii}

Age of Majority =

Based on Mississippi law, anyone under the age of 21 is considered a minor, while those 21 years old and older are considered adults.^{viii}

Age of Consent =

In Mississippi, the age when children can legally consent or agree to sex is 16.^{ix}



V. PARENTAL RIGHTS AT RISK IN MISSISSIPPI

Warning! Most CSE programs put parental rights at risk by either encouraging or requiring that parents not be notified and/or by instructing children how to access such things as abortion, contraception and other so-called health services **without parental notification or consent**.

It is particularly dangerous to encourage students in this way, particularly considering the fact the laws often support what is being taught in CSE programs. For example:

Without notifying or receiving consent from their parents, minor children in Mississippi may consent to and receive:

- Some contraceptive services
- All STI (sexually transmitted infection) services
- All prenatal care services

In Mississippi, parental consent is required for:

- Abortion services



VI. NEWS HEADLINES FROM MISSISSIPPI

July 11, 2018 – “Survey Finds Fewer Students Having Sex But Condom Use Down”

[HTTP://WWW.MPBONLINE.ORG/BLOGS/NEWS/2018/07/11/SURVEY-FINDS-FEWER-STUDENTS-HAVING-SEX-BUT-CONDOM-USE-DOWN/](http://www.mpbonline.org/blogs/news/2018/07/11/survey-finds-fewer-students-having-sex-but-condom-use-down/)

May 2, 2018 – “MTV feature focuses on sex education through the eyes of Mississippi teens” <https://www.wjtv.com/news/metro/mtv-feature-focuses-on-sex-education-through-the-eyes-of-mississippi-teens/1156145446>

May 1, 2018 - “MTV takes a look at sex education law in Mississippi”

<https://www.wapt.com/article/mtv-takes-a-look-at-sex-education-in-mississippi/20111799>

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March 29, 2016 - “Mississippi extends abstinence-based sex-ed”

<https://mississippitoday.org/2016/03/29/mississippi-extends-abstinence-based-sex-ed/>

March 9, 2018 – “Mississippi Lawmakers Pass Abortion Restriction Bill”

<http://archive.kuow.org/post/mississippi-lawmakers-pass-abortion-restriction-bill>

Oct. 23, 2017 – “Two Sex Educators On Confronting Taboo Topics In The Classroom”

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/two-sex-educators-on-confronting-taboo-topics-in-the-classroom_us_59b71060e4b027c149e1b7db



VII. OPT-OUT FORM

By signing a parental non-consent form, also known as an opt-out form, parents can protect their children from being subjected to harmful CSE programs. Download and print the provided form and modify it as needed (see included instructions). Sign it and take it to your child’s school, and ask that it be put on file as part of your child’s permanent record and that all teachers and instructors be notified.

A sample opt-out form, provided by Liberty Counsel, along with instructions for use, can be found at: stopcse.org/mississippi



VIII. GET INVOLVED TO STOP CSE

You can get involved to stop CSE and protect the health and innocence of children across the U.S. and in countries around the world:

1. Sign the Stop CSE petition at stopcse.org/petition/
2. Watch the “War Against Children” documentary and share this link to the documentary with your friends and neighbors at stopcse.org/film/
3. Connect with others in your state who are working to Stop CSE in your schools to see how you can get involved. Go to stopcse.org/Mississippi to connect.



IX. RESOURCES

- Mississippi Legislation - <http://www.legislature.ms.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
- Mississippi Title 37 (Code) - <https://advance.lexis.com/container?config=00JAAzNzhjOTYxNC0wZjRkLTQzNzAtYjYjIYS1jNjExZWYxZGFhMGYKAFBvZENhdGFsb2cMIW40w5iIH7toHnTBIEP0&crd=6b891626-c3a8-4787-9004-bf5a79e6994a&prid=e03e857c-8b88-4bc1-b4b7-62cf07649705>
- Mississippi legislative Sexual Education guidelines - <https://advance.lexis.com/documentpage/?pdmfid=1000516&crd=bf38f6bf-b8b5-46b2-96ad-045210b5e9a5&nodeid=AATAAKAAHAAB&nodepath=%2FROOT%2FAAT%2FAATAAK%2FAATAAKAAH%2FAATAAKAAHAAB&title=%C2%A7+37-13-171.+Implementation+of+abstinence-only+or+abstinence-plus+education%3B+State+Department+of+Education+approval+of+curriculum+for+sex-related+education+required%3B+components+of+abstinence-only+and+abstinence-plus+education%3B+parent+programs%3B+separation+of+students+by+gender+during+sex-related+education+instruction+%5BREpealed+effective+July+1%2C+2021%5D&config=00JABhZDIzMTViZS04NjcxLTQ1MDItOTIiOS03MDg0ZTQxYzU4ZTQKAFBvZENhdGFsb2f8inKxYiqNVSiHJeNKRIUp&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fstatutes-legislation%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A5PCF-DTM0-0035-R21P-00008-00&ecomp=g35vkkk&prid=6b891626-c3a8-4787-9004-bf5a79e6994a>
- Mississippi parental rights in Sexual Education - <https://advance.lexis.com/documentpage/?pdmfid=1000516&crd=bad9678d-1053-462d-ba48-e5a138bccdd2a&title=%C2%A7+37-13173.+Notice+to+parents%3B+right+to+request+inclusion+of+children+in+program+of+instruction%3B+review+of+materials&nodepath=%2FROOT%2FAAT%2FAATAAK%2FAATAAKAAH%2FAATAAKAAHAAC&nodeid=AATAAKAAHAAC&config=00JABhZDIzMTViZS04NjcxLTQ1MDItOTIiOS03MDg0ZTQxYzU4ZTQKAFBvZENhdGFsb2f8inKxYiqNVSiHJeNKRIUp&pddocfullpath=%2Fshared%2Fdocument%2Fstatutes-legislation%2Furn%3AcontentItem%3A5PCF-DTM0-0035-R21R-00008-00&ecomp=g35vkkk&prid=5e9c468d-3b0b-4874-84f2-982189f2586f>
- HB 999 - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/docs/healthy-schools/hb0999sq.pdf?sfvrsn=2>
- Mississippi Department of Education:
 - Health Education Curriculum - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OHS/HES/health-education-services---curriculum-and-instruction>
 - HIV prevention - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OHS/HES/health-education-services---hiv-prevention>
 - List of Curricula - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ohs/home>
- Legislation websites by state - <https://www.congress.gov/state-legislature-websites>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Resource TPPP page - <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/grant-programs/teen-pregnancy-prevention-program-tpp/current-grantees/index.html>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Resource other state funding - <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource-library/search#?area%5B1981%5D=1981&type%5B5168%5D=5168&sort=recent&ajax=1>
- TPPP Funding - <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/grant-programs/teen-pregnancy-prevention-program-tpp/about/index.html>
- Abstinence Education Grant Program Medical Accuracy Guide - https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/medical_accuracy_aegp.pdf

Additional Resources:

- DOCUMENTARY: *The War on Children: The Comprehensive Sexuality Education Agenda* (FWI Documentary) – <https://stopcse.org>
- STUDY: Re-Examining the Evidence: School-based Comprehensive Sex Education in the United States (IRE Study) – www.sexedreport.org
- REPORT: An Evidence-Based Response to a Critique of Abstinence Education (IRE Report) - https://www.comprehensivesexualityeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/IRE_Response_To_Santelli_Article_4-20-18.pdf



X. CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Let us put you in contact with other people and organizations who are actively involved in helping to protect the health and innocence of children.

Fill out the contact form on www.stopcse.org/mississippi or email us your name, city, state, school district, and any questions or concerns you may have and we will put you in contact with people from your state or one of our national representatives.

Email Address: StopCSE@familywatch.org

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ⁱ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource-library/search#?area%5B1981%5D=1981&type%5B5168%5D=5168&sort=recent&ajax=1>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/grant-programs/teen-pregnancy-prevention-program-tpp/about/index.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ Mississippi Legislative site -

<https://advance.lexis.com/container?config=00JAAzNzhjOTYxNC0wZjRkLTQzNzAtYjJlYS1jNjExZWYxZGFhMGYKAfBvZENhdGFsb2cMIW40w5iIH7toHnTBIEP0&crd=5e9c468d-3b0b-4874-84f2-982189f2586f&prid=9385f97a-af0e-46ae-8a6a-7df79c054f73>

^{iv} House Bill 999 <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/docs/healthy-schools/hb0999sg.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

^v Mississippi DOE - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/ohs/home>

^{vi} DASH from CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/sexualbehaviors/strategies.htm>

^{vii} Mississippi DOE - <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/OHS/HES/health-education-services---hiv-prevention>

^{viii} <http://statelaws.findlaw.com/family-laws/legal-ages.html>

^{ix} <http://statelaws.findlaw.com/family-laws/legal-ages.html>