

RHODE ISLAND STATE PROFILE

Prepared with an interest in protecting the health and innocence of children, this profile provides an overview of sex education in Rhode Island, 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 RHODE ISLAND

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS	YES	NO	N/A	LEGISLATIVE CODE
Sex Education Required		X		
Sex Education Optional	X			16-22-18
If/When Provided, Sexual Education Must:				
Be Medically Accurate*			X	
Be Age Appropriate			X	
Be Evidence-based			X	
Be Culturally Appropriate and Unbiased			X	
Reference/Stress Abstinence**	X			16-22-17(a), 16-22-18(a)
Include HIV Education/AIDS	X			16-22-17(a)
Be LGBTQ Inclusive			X	
Include Safety Against Sexual Abuse			X	
Parental Role in Sexual Education:				
Parents must be notified			X	
Parent Involvement			X	
Access to Review Curriculum	X			16-22-17(b), 16-22-18(b)
Opt-In			X	
Opt-Out Option	X			16-22-17(c), 16-22-18(c)

*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/rhode-island or by emailing StopCSE@FamilyWatch.org.



II. RHODE ISLAND SEX EDUCATION FEDERAL FUNDING PROFILE

Federal Government Programs and Grants Awarded for Rhode Island

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.

- Rhode Island received DASH funds totaling \$415,000 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.”

- Rhode Island received PREP funds totaling \$250,000 in fiscal year 2017.ⁱ

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.

- Rhode Island 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.**

- Rhode Island received NO Title V award in fiscal year 2017.ⁱⁱ

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)

- Rhode Island received NO TPP funding for years 2015-2019.ⁱⁱⁱ



III. FEDERALLY FUNDED SEX EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN RHODE ISLAND

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 Rhode Island

FUNDING SOURCE	PROGRAM OR CURRICULUM	FUNDING RECIPIENT
DASH	National Standards for Sexuality Education	Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE)
PREP	Teen Outreach Program (TOP)	Rhode Island Department of Health

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 RHODE ISLAND SEX EDUCATION LEGISLATION & GUIDELINES

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

According to 2017 Rhode Island Education Code Title 16^{iv} (as of July 2, 2018)

16-22-17^v AIDS education program.

- The department of elementary and secondary education shall establish comprehensive AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) instruction, which shall provide students with accurate information and instruction on AIDS transmission and prevention, and which course shall also address abstinence from sexual activity as the preferred means of prevention, as a basic education program requirement.

- Upon written request to the school principal, a pupil not less than eighteen years of age or a parent or legal guardian of a pupil less than eighteen years of age shall be permitted to examine the curriculum program instruction materials at the school in which his or her child is enrolled.
- A parent or legal guardian may exempt his or her child from the program by written directive to the principal of the school. No child so exempted shall be penalized academically by reason of the exemption.

16-22-18^{vi} Health and family life courses.

Every secondary school teaching courses in family life or sex education within this state shall include

- abstinence from sexual activity and refraining from sexual intercourse as the preferred method of pregnancy prevention and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

Age of Majority^{vii} =

Based on Rhode Island law, anyone under the age of 18 is considered a minor, while those 18 years old and older are considered adults.

Age of Consent^{viii} =

In Rhode Island, the age when children can legally consent or agree to sex is 16.



V. PARENTAL RIGHTS AT RISK IN RHODE ISLAND

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 Rhode Island may consent to and receive:

- All STI (sexually transmitted infection) services

In Rhode Island, parental consent is required for:

- Adoption services
- Abortion services



VI. NEWS HEADLINES FROM RHODE ISLAND

August 31 – “#MeToo Leaves Its Mark From State Capitols to Classrooms”

<https://rewire.news/article/2018/08/31/metoo-state-capitols-to-classrooms/>

March 16, 2018 - “Introducing Consent to Sexual Education”

<http://ripr.org/post/introducing-consent-sexual-education#stream/0>

January 25, 2018 - “RI Lawmaker: Consent Should Be Taught in Sex Education”

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/rhode-island/articles/2018-01-25/ri-lawmaker-consent-should-be-taught-in-sex-education>



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/rhode-island



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/rhode-island to connect.



IX. RESOURCES

- Rhode Island Title 16 Education - <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/INDEX.HTM>
- Rhode Island Health Curriculum - <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-22/INDEX.HTM>
- Rhode Island Department of Education Health and Safety Program - <http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/HealthSafety.aspx>
- Rhode Island Statutes - <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/>
- Rhode Island Legislation - <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Pages/Default.aspx>
- U.S. 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/rhode-island 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 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>

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

^{iv} <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/INDEX.HTM>

^v <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-22/16-22-17.HTM>

^{vi} <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/Statutes/TITLE16/16-22/16-22-18.HTM>

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

^{viii} <https://www.legalmatch.com/law-library/article/age-of-consent-by-state.html?intakeredesigned=1>