



Analysis of State Health Education Laws

RHODE ISLAND SUMMARY REPORT

Overview

State laws and regulations in health education serve as a foundation to drive school-based programs and instruction. Well-designed and well-implemented sexual health education programs have been shown to reduce student risky sexual behaviors and improve health-related behaviors and outcomes. The following report provides a snapshot of **Rhode Island** laws and regulations and school health policies and practices related to sexual health education, HIV prevention education, STD prevention education, and sexual health risk behaviors among **Rhode Island** high school students.

Rhode Island health education laws and regulations were analyzed across three topics of instruction (sexual health education, HIV Prevention, and STD Prevention) and a variety of characteristics related to curriculum and instruction. These characteristics were identified by researchers as potential facilitators for successful programs. The law and regulation data presented only indicate the presence or absence of a particular component related to health education and may not accurately reflect practice within the state.

Rhode Island Law Facts

- The agency with authority to choose or approve curriculum for sexual health education, HIV Prevention, and STD Prevention instruction is not addressed.
- Parents/Guardians must be provided the opportunity to Opt-out students from sexual health education, HIV Prevention, and STD Prevention instruction.
- Instruction regarding contraception is not addressed.
- Abstinence is a required topic of instruction for sexual health education, HIV Prevention, and STD Prevention.

Core Topics Addressed in Rhode Island Law

Topic of Instruction	Level of Requirement
Sexual Health Education	Required
HIV Prevention	Required
STD Prevention	Required

Presence of Evidence Based Components

Common Attributes of Effective School-Based Sexual Health Education	Included in Law(s) <i>Topic of Instruction</i>
Curriculum is delivered by trained instructors	Not included in laws
Parental/Stakeholder Involvement. Parents and/or other key stakeholders are involved in the review, development, and/or approval of curriculum	Required <i>Sexual Health Education, HIV Prevention and STD Prevention</i>
Curriculum follows Federal or National Standards, Guidelines, and/or Recommendations	Not included in laws
Curriculum is appropriate for age or developmental stage	Required <i>Sexual Health Education, HIV Prevention and STD Prevention</i>
Curriculum is medically accurate	Required <i>Sexual Health Education</i>
Instruction is sequential across grade levels	Required <i>Sexual Health Education</i>
Curriculum includes instruction on strategies or skills	Required <i>Sexual Health Education</i>



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention

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School Health Policies and Practices in Rhode Island



79% of secondary schools provided those who teach sexual health education with strategies that are age-appropriate, relevant, and actively engage students in learning



98% of secondary schools taught how HIV and other STDs are transmitted in a required course during grades 9, 10, 11, or 12

Percent of secondary schools in Rhode Island in which teachers tried to increase student knowledge on...



Human Sexuality



HIV Prevention



STD Prevention

Risk Behaviors Among Rhode Island High School Students



Have had sexual intercourse with ≥ 4 partners



Have had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 years



Used a condom during last sexual intercourse*



In a classroom of **30** high school students in Rhode Island,
8 are currently sexually active,
3 ever had sex, but are not currently sexually active,
19 never had sex.

Source: School Health Profiles (Profiles), 2016. Profiles is a national survey of middle and high school principals and lead health education teachers assessing school health policies and practices in states, large urban school districts, and territories.

*Among the students in Rhode Island who were currently sexually active (had sexual intercourse during the 3 months before the survey).

Source: National Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2015.

Know Your State Laws and Policies

For more information on: State laws and practices; Attributes of an effective sexual health education program; and State specific health data, visit www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/about/policy.htm