

Research

Youth enrolled in abstinence-only programs were no more likely than those not enrolled in the programs to delay sexual initiation, to have fewer sexual partners, or to abstain entirely from sex.

Trenholm C, et al. [Impacts of Four Title V, Section 510 Abstinence Education Programs Final Report](#). Princeton, NJ: Mathematic Policy Research; submitted to U.S. Dept. Health & Human Services, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2007.

Teenagers who received some type of comprehensive sex education were 60 percent less likely to get pregnant or get someone else pregnant.

Kohler, Pamela K., et al. [“Abstinence-Only and Comprehensive Sex Education and the Initiation of Sexual Activity and Teen Pregnancy.”](#) *Journal of Adolescent Health*, vol. 42, no. 4, 2008, pp. 344–351.

To date, no abstinence-only program has been proven through rigorous evaluation to help youth delay sex for a significant period of time, help youth decrease their number of sex partners, or reduce STI or pregnancy rates among teens.

[“Comprehensive Sex Education: Research and Results.”](#) *Future of Sex Education, Advocates for Youth*, 2009.

Comprehensive sex education curricula help young people to delay sex, build healthy relationships, and prevent STIs and unintended pregnancies when they do become sexually active.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), [Emerging Evidence, Lessons and Practice in Comprehensive Sexuality Education: A Global Review](#), Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015.

In a rigorous literature review of 26 comprehensive sex education programs, 14 demonstrated a statistically significant delay in the initiation of sex.

13 programs showed reductions in the number of sex partners and/or increased monogamy among program participants.

13 programs showed statistically significant declines in teen pregnancy, HIV or other STIs.

[“Sex Education and Other Programs That Work to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, HIV & Sexually Transmitted Infections.”](#) *Advocates for Youth*. 2008.

LGBTQ-inclusive curricula led to lower rates of bullying in California schools.

Snapp, Shannon D., et al. [“LGBTQ-Inclusive curricula: why supportive curricula matter.”](#) *Sex Education*, vol. 15, no. 6, 2015, pp. 580–596.

Statistics

Relationships & Wellbeing

- 9.2 percent of Massachusetts high schoolers reported having ever had sexual contact against their will. That rate soars to 24 percent for gay, lesbian, or bisexual students.
- 8 percent of Massachusetts high schoolers reported being forced to do things of a sexual nature in the past year by someone they were dating.
- 9 percent of Massachusetts high schoolers reported being hurt by someone they were dating. Younger teens are even more vulnerable, with 16 percent of Massachusetts middle schoolers reporting the same experiences.
- 48 percent of gay, lesbian, or bisexual high schoolers reported seriously considering suicide in the past year, compared to 11 percent of heterosexual high schoolers.
- 25 percent of gay, lesbian, or bisexual high schoolers reported having attempted suicide in the past year, compared to 5.2 percent of heterosexual high schoolers.

Sexual Health

- Just 52 percent of Massachusetts high schoolers reported being taught how to use condoms in school.
- 60 percent of Massachusetts high schoolers reported not talking with parents about sexuality or prevention of HIV, STDs, or pregnancy in the past year.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Department of Public Health. [Health & Risk Behaviors of Massachusetts Youth](#). 2015.

STI Rates

- 23,913 cases of chlamydia were reported in Massachusetts in 2015, increasing 57 percent from 2006.
- 62 percent of chlamydia cases were reported in 2015 by adolescents and young adults, ages 15 to 24.
- 3,683 cases of gonorrhea were reported in Massachusetts in 2015, an increase of 52 percent since 2006.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences. [2015 Integrated HIV/AIDS, STD, and Viral Hepatitis Surveillance Report](#). 2015.