10 Questions for Health Departments
When Assisting Schools and DOEs

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SIECUS

- Private, non-profit NGO
- Established 1964
- Offices in NYC and DC

- Funding from:
  - Foundation grants
  - CDC-DASH cooperative agreement (HIV)
10 Questions for Health Departments When Assisting Schools and DOE

1. What does state law say about health education and sexual health ed?
   • What is the local school district policy?
   • Do your SEA/LEA/TEA partners know their own laws and policies?
10 Questions for Health Departments
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2. What do you mean when you say “evidence based”, “science based”, or “medically accurate”?
   - How does your SEA/LEA TEA partner define these?
10 Questions for Health Departments
When Assisting Schools and DOE

3. Which media sources cover health/sex ed news in this community?
   - How are the media relations of your SEA/LEA/TEA partner?
   - Is it worth it to ‘go proactive’?
10 Questions for Health Departments
When Assisting Schools and DOE’s

4. How are you defining “abstinence”?
   • Does your SEA/LEA/TEA partner agree with your definition?
   • When is it okay for abstinence to “end” according to your program vs. the SEA/LEA/TEA?
10 Questions for Health Departments
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5. How are LGBTQ youth and parents addressed in your programs?
   • How are they addressed by your SEA/LEA/TEA partner?
   • What if the focus is “teen pregnancy prevention”?
10 Questions for Health Departments
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6. Have you reassured your LEA/SEA/TEA partner that you understand their limitations?
   • Do they know you don’t expect schools to be the sole change agent?
   • Do you both acknowledge ‘structural change barriers’?
DATA TOOLS

State Education Data Profiles
Search for statewide information in elementary/secondary education, postsecondary education and selected demo for all states in the U.S. using a variety of NCES data sources.
Visit State Education Data Profiles

NAEP State Comparisons
Search and list states and jurisdictions according to average scale scores of students overall and average scale scores selected student groups (e.g., male and female students, White students, Black students, Hispanic students) for a year. It also orders states and jurisdictions by differences between groups of students and/or years (changes), and changes in differences.
Visit NAEP State Comparisons

School District Mapping and Demographics
Use this website to see maps of school districts of interest. School district geographic and demographic data use describing and analyzing characteristics of school districts, children, and K-12 education is also available.
Visit School District Mapping and Demographics

Census 2000 School District Profiles
Obtain a demographic profile for public school districts derived from the 2000 Census profile showing demographic characteristics of one school district compared to another.
Visit Census 2000 School District Profiles
Maps and data from the U.S. DOE
10 Questions for Health Departments When Assisting Schools and DOEs

7. Are you reading “Education Week”, “Teacher Magazine”, or other on-line publications of the public school world?

- Are your LEA/SEA/TEA partners?
- How can you encourage dialogue using these resources?
Rigorous Study Finds Abstinence Program Effective

‘Positive intervention’ differs from many such efforts.

By Mary Ann Zehr

A randomized-control study by well-respected researchers in the field of sex education has found that an abstinence program taught to African-American middle schoolers was more effective than other kinds of interventions in delaying sexual activity.

The findings differ from a number of previous studies that didn’t find evidence that abstinence-focused programs work. But the program studied differed from many abstinence efforts in its design, in that it did not stress remaining chaste until marriage.

Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, and the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada, found in their study of 662 students in 6th and 7th grade that a third of participants in an abstinence program said they had sex in the two years following the program, compared with nearly half the participants in the control group. The abstinence
Comprehensive Sex Ed. Programs Effective, Panel Finds

"Prevention of HIV/AIDS, Other STIs, and Pregnancy: Group-Based Abstinence Education Interventions for Adolescents" and "Prevention of HIV/AIDS, Other STIs, and Pregnancy: Group-Based Comprehensive Risk Reduction Interventions for Adolescents"

A panel of independent medical experts has concluded that comprehensive sex education programs that teach contraception methods and safer sexual practices help reduce teenagers’ risky sexual behavior and limit the spread of sexually transmitted infections. But it found that evidence was more limited on the question of whether such programs are effective in...

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New Wisconsin Law: Sex Ed. Must Include Birth Control

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle has just signed legislation that requires the state’s public schools to teach about birth control and sexually transmitted diseases as part of comprehensive sex education classes, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reports.

Apparently, the new law still leaves it up to local school boards to decide whether to offer sex education courses. But starting next school year, those districts that do will have to include information about how to use condoms and other forms of birth control and describe their benefits and side effects, the newspaper explains. They will also have to tell students how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. Parents will be able to remove their children from sex ed. classes, as they can now.

The bill was reportedly opposed by all Republicans in both chambers of the Wisconsin legislature.

Meanwhile, in Utah, a Republican state senator says he’s dropping a proposal that would have clarified that teachers can talk about contraception, after a
10 Questions for Health Departments
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8. How are you already engaging parents of children and teens on sexual and reproductive health?
   • Are these parents aware of your plans to work with school personnel?
   • Where can you fit into existing outreach to parents?
10 Questions for Health Departments When Assisting Schools and DOEs

9. Do you routinely refer to the National Health Education Standards and SIECUS K-12 Guidelines?
   • Does your SEA/LEA/TEA partner?
   • How can these be applied more routinely?
K-12 Guidelines for Sexuality Education

- Comprehensive
- K-12
- Originally issued 1991
Original National Guidelines Task Force

20 experts on sexuality education/research

- American Medical Association
- National Education Association
- National School Boards Association
- American School Health Association
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America
- US Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
Purpose of the Guidelines

• A framework of the key concepts, topics, and messages that all K-12 sexuality education programs would ideally include.

• The primary goal of sexuality education is a sexually healthy adult.
Original National Guidelines Task Force

• Indiana University
• New Jersey Medical School
• New York University

Local School District Representatives
• St. Louis, Missouri
• Irvington, New Jersey
• Westport, Connecticut
SIECUS Guidelines: 6 Key Concepts

1. Human Development
2. Relationships
3. Personal Skills
4. Sexual Behavior
5. Sexual Health
6. Society and Culture
Topics within Concepts

• Key Concept 1: Human Development
  – Topic 1 (of 6): Anatomy

• Key Concept 4: Sexual Behavior
  – Topic 4 (of 7): Abstinence

• Key Concept 6: Society and Culture
  – Topic 7 (of 7): Sexuality and the Arts
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10. Are you familiar with other SIECUS resources that may assist school personnel?
• How can you address reluctance to use SIECUS materials?
• Are your partners aware of SIECUS’s CDC-DASH funding?
Helping LEAs and SEAs navigate policy & advocacy

• SIECUS State Profiles
Helping LEAs and SEAs navigate policy & advocacy

- SIECUS Community Action Kit
Supporting schools with publications for youth and parents

Communication Skills

No matter who you are talking to, good communication skills are important. How you say something can sometimes be as important as what you actually say.

Everyone has different styles of communicating. Here are some hints that might help you make sure other people understand what you are really saying.

Good ideas:
- Really listening
- Making eye contact
- Stating your feelings
- Using statements that start with "I" to show that you're talking for yourself
- Trying to understand the other person
- Offering possible solutions to a problem
Helping SEAs and LEAs identify age-appropriate classroom lessons
Helping SEAs and LEAs identify age-appropriate classroom lessons

- Sex Ed Library
  www.sexedlibrary.org

- Align lessons with the 4 developmental levels in the SIECUS Guidelines
For more information on SIECUS:

www.siecus.org
www.sexedlibrary.org
www.seriouslysexuality.org

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Thank you!