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TEEN SEXUAL HEALTH IN LOUISIANA

Many teens in Louisiana are at risk of experiencing poor reproductive health, which has a number of negative implications for teens, for the children of teens, and for our state. We see the health outcomes in teen birth rates and sexually transmitted infections among our young people.

Teen parenthood can have adverse consequences both for the mothers and their children. In Louisiana teen mothers are more likely to live in poverty and to be at risk for other poor health outcomes.



Louisiana's rank for number of births among females ages 15 - 19.

Public cost of teen childbearing in Louisiana



WE CAN CHANGE THIS

Implement evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs reduce teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and behavioral .

Screen and counsel adolescents for sexual risk behaviors, HIV and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and dating violence.

Provide teen-friendly sexual and reproductive health care services.

Increase the availability of effective contraceptives (such as condoms, birth control pills, the patch, the vaginal ring, the intrauterine device [IUD], and/or injectable birth control methods)



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SEX EDUCATION POLICY IN LOUISIANA

We know that adolescents in our state are experiencing negative sexual health outcomes, but most schools in our state are not providing students with evidence based sexual health education and we don't have data on how many Louisiana teens are engaging in sexual risk behaviors.

WHAT IS THE POLICY ON SEX EDUCATION?

Louisiana Sex Education Law (RS 17:281 §281)

- Public elementary and secondary schools **may, but are not required to**, offer instruction in "sex education"... integrated into an existing course of study.
- "Sex education" is the dissemination of factual biological or pathological information related to the human reproduction system and **may include** sexually transmitted disease, pregnancy, childbirth, puberty, menstruation, and menopause, as well as factual information about parental responsibilities under the child support laws of the state.
- "Sex education" **shall not include** religious beliefs, practices in human sexuality, nor the subjective moral and ethical judgments of the instructor or other persons.
- Students **shall not be tested, quizzed, or surveyed** about their personal or family beliefs or practices in sex, morality, or religion.
- **No contraceptive** or abortifacient drug, device, or other similar product can be distributed at any public school.
- **No sex education** course in public schools can utilize any sexually explicit materials depicting male or female **homosexual activity**.
- **Major emphasis** of sex education instruction in the public schools is to encourage **sexual abstinence**.
- **No program** offering sex education instruction can **counsel or advocate abortion**.
- A city or parish school system can only accept **federal funds for sex education** when the use of funds does not violate Louisiana's law and only upon approval by the local school board.
- **Orleans Parish School Board** can offer instruction in sex education beginning in 3rd grade (7th grade for all other Parishes).