

# eyes open Your Connection • To Adolescent Sexual Health Iowa

**wise iowa project**  
Working to Institutionalize Sex Ed

The WISE (Working to Institutionalize Sex Ed) Iowa Initiative is a project of EyesOpenIowa: Your Connection to Adolescent Sexual Health.

EyesOpenIowa leads communities in advocacy, education and collaboration to ensure adolescent sexual health.



## WISE IOWA INITIATIVE

# Goal

The Working to Institutionalize Sexuality Education (WISE) Initiative is a nationwide effort to support schools and districts in the effective and sustainable implementation of K-12 Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE). The WISE Iowa Initiative partners with school districts to support them in adopting, implementing and institutionalizing comprehensive sexuality education programs that are research-based, medically accurate, age-appropriate and comply with the State's Human Growth and Development mandate, Iowa Code 279.50.

19% saturation of Iowa schools are receiving assistance through the WISE Initiative, totaling 78,821 students in WISE partner school districts.

Through the resources provided by the WISE Initiative, partner school districts have advanced their efforts to create sex education programs that are sustainable and comply with our state mandate.



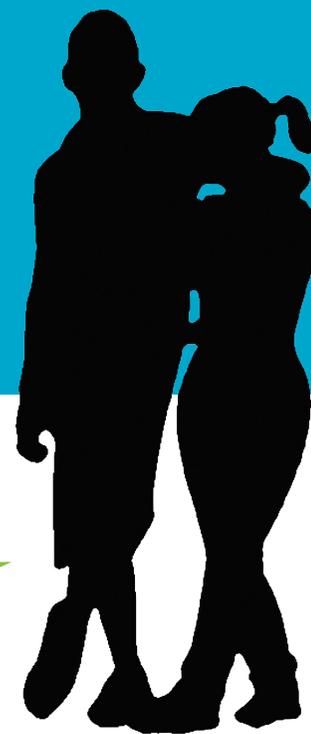
## COMPONENTS *of this Initiative include:*

- A collaborative assessment of school district's policies and practices.
- Mapping and alignment of curricula to the Iowa Core and National Sexuality Education Standards.
- Enhancing the readiness of districts to institutionalize the implementation of comprehensive sex education.
- Cadre of professional trainers was developed to provide instruction and training on select evidence-based sex education curricula and skill building.
- Establish implementation monitoring.
- Customized professional development trainings including teaching techniques to increase comfort in providing sex education, which builds capacity and program sustainability.



## WHAT IS **COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION (CSE)**

Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE) addresses both abstinence and age-appropriate, medically accurate information. Comprehensive sex education is also developmentally appropriate, introducing information on relationships, decision-making, assertiveness, and skill building to resist social/peer pressure, depending on grade-level.



### Is *Your* School **WISE?**

Sexually healthy teens who are prepared to make responsible decisions are more likely to succeed in school, achieve meaningful interpersonal relationships, and envision positive futures for themselves.

EyesOpenIowa assists schools in designing and delivering sexuality education K-12 that is planned, sequential and part of a comprehensive school health education approach.

### WHY IOWA

#### *Why Now?*

Public opinion polls of parents of middle school students show that **93%** believe that it is very important or somewhat important to have sex education included as part of school curriculum. **91%** of parents of high school students agree. Both groups support educating adolescents about condom and contraception use. <sup>2</sup>

**73%** of adults and **56%** of teens wish for more information about both abstinence and birth control or protection in schools. <sup>2</sup>

### SEXUAL RISK BEHAVIORS

The 2011 Iowa Risk Behavior Survey indicates that among high school students: <sup>3</sup>

**44%** had sexual intercourse

**4%** had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 years

**13%** had sexual intercourse with four or more persons during their life

**33%** were currently sexually active <sup>a</sup>

**39%** did not use a condom during last sexual intercourse <sup>b</sup>

The state legislature has established the need for factual education of all of Iowa's students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Age-appropriate and research-based education is required by Iowa Code 279.5.

# SEX EDUCATION IN IOWA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## *Guidelines & Resources*

### SUMMARY

Iowa Code section 279.50 requires public schools to provide age-appropriate and research-based instruction in human growth and development including instruction about human sexuality, self-esteem, stress management, interpersonal relationships, domestic abuse, HPV (Human Papilloma Virus) and the availability of a vaccine to prevent HPV, and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) in grades kindergarten through twelve.



### DEFINITIONS

Iowa Code section 279.50 provides the following definitions to assist school districts in assessing curricular materials.

#### *Age-appropriate*

means topics, messages, and teaching methods suitable to particular ages or age groups of children and adolescents, based on developing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacity typical for the age or age group.

#### *Research-based*

means all of the following:

1. Complete information that is verified or supported by the weight of research conducted in compliance with accepted scientific methods; recognized as medically accurate and objective by leading professional organizations and agencies with relevant expertise in the field, such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Public Health Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Association of School Nurses; and, published in peer-reviewed journals where appropriate.
2. Information that is free of racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and gender biases.

### PROVISIONS

#### *To Parents and Guardians*

As stated in Iowa Code section 279.50, school districts are required to provide to the parent or guardian of any student enrolled in the school district annual information about the human growth and development curriculum to be taught that year and how parents/guardians may review the materials prior to their use in the classroom. In addition, schools must notify parents or guardians that they may file a written request with the appropriate principal to excuse their child from any instruction to which they object.

## REQUIRED TOPICS

*For grades 7 and 8, the regulations of the Iowa Department of Education as stated in Iowa Administrative Code 281-12.5 require health instruction that includes the following topics:*

- human sexuality
- self-esteem
- stress management
- interpersonal relationships
- emotional and social health
- health resources
- prevention and control of disease, and
- characteristics of communicable diseases, including STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) and AIDS.

*For grades 9–12, the same regulations require health instruction that includes:*

- human growth and development
- substance abuse and nonuse
- emotional and social health
- health resources,
- prevention and control of disease, including STDs and AIDS,
- current crucial health issues
- human sexuality
- self-esteem
- stress management, and
- interpersonal relationships.

*According to Iowa Code section 279.50, schools are not prohibited from developing and making available abstinence-based or abstinence-only materials or from offering an abstinence-based or abstinence-only curriculum in meeting the human sexuality component of the human growth and development requirements. However, the content of these materials must be age-appropriate and research-based as defined above.*

## PUBLIC ACCESS TO CURRICULUM

Iowa Code section 279.50 requires schools to comply with requests from any agency or organization that asks for information about the human growth and development curriculum used in each grade level and the procedure used by the district for inspecting and updating the instructional materials.

## CURRICULA TRAININGS PROVIDED THROUGH EYESOPENIOWA:

Making Proud Choices!

Making A Difference!

Draw the Line/Respect the Line

Safer Choices

Reducing the Risk

All4You!

The Great Body Shop

Cuidate!

Be Proud Be Responsible!

Becoming a Responsible Teen (BART)

Promoting Health Among Teens!

F.L.A.S.H.





# Evaluations

Evaluations of comprehensive sex education programs help youth by:

- **delaying onset of sexual activity**
- **reducing the number of sexual partners**
- **reducing the frequency of sexual activity**
- **increasing academic achievement and decreased dropout rates**

Evidence shows youth who receive comprehensive sex education are **NOT** more likely to increase sexual activity.

## Partners

The WISE Iowa Initiative developed a network of partners who are actively investing their expertise and resources to the Initiative.

These partners include:

Iowa Department of Education

Iowa Department of Human Services

Iowa Department of Public Health

The Grove Foundation

Ford Foundation

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

David and Lucile Packard Foundation

## FUNDING

*In 2009, Iowa was selected to become a WISE state due to our Human Growth and Development mandate, Iowa Code 279.50 and also our state's favorable policy climate for comprehensive sexuality education. Iowa is one of ten states nationally to receive WISE Initiative funding.*



## OUR FOUR COMMITMENTS TO EXCELLENCE

**EyesOpenIowa:**  
*Your Connection To Adolescent Sexual Health invites all providers of sexual health education in Iowa to voluntarily commit to the following:*



### *Accuracy*

Sexual health education will be factual, medically accurate, and informed by the weight of available peer-reviewed research.

### *Accountability*

Providers will voluntarily adhere to a basic set of science-based standards and be willing to accept a periodic peer review of practices and program content.

### *Affirmation*

Sexual health education will affirm sexuality as a natural lifelong quality of being human which can be expressed in healthy, responsible ways.

### *Advocacy*

Providers will actively advocate for:

- Abstinence first from any form of risky sexual activity,
- Age-appropriate, medically accurate sexuality education for all,
- Access and referral to reproductive health care and services for sexually active youth, and
- The efficacy of contraception and condoms in reducing the risk of pregnancy and STI/HIV infection.

[www.eyesopeniowa.org](http://www.eyesopeniowa.org)



**Let Us Help Make *Your* School WISE**  
PLEASE CONTACT EYESOPENIOWA'S WISE DEPARTMENT:

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<sup>1</sup> Advocates for Youth. (2009, September). Comprehensive Sex Education: Research and Results: Retrieved from [www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/fscse.pdf](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/advfy/documents/fscse.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. (2012). Retrieved from [www.thenationalcampaign.org/state-data/state-profile.aspx?state=iowa](http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/state-data/state-profile.aspx?state=iowa)

<sup>3</sup> National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. (2011, November 9). Healthy Youth!. Retrieved from CDC website: [www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/states/ia/htm](http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/states/ia/htm)

<sup>a</sup> Had sexual intercourse with at least one person during the 3 months before the survey.

<sup>b</sup> Among students who were currently sexually active.

