

Abstinence Sex Education in Ohio Schools: Good News/Bad News from State Audit

Press Release

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Today, [Protect Ohio Children](#) released a detailed analysis of the status of sexuality education in Ohio as revealed through an audit conducted by the Ohio Department of Education in 2022.

The results show good news, unclear news and some very bad news. Since 1999, Ohio law has required that schools adhere to an instructional parameter that abstinence until marriage is the expected standard for sexuality, and also teaching that sexual activity by teens produces serious physical, psychological, emotional, and social side effects.

“The good news is that many school districts adhere to the state law and provide their students with the benefits of a clear abstinence message,” said Diane Stover, director of Protect Ohio Children. “The bad news is that a number of districts betray students by teaching lessons condoning high risk, early sexual activity. And these districts, while the ODE may accept the claim that they are compliant, are actually operating outside Ohio law.”

Among larger school districts reporting explicit and inappropriate “comprehensive sexuality education” (CSE) are Columbus City, Cleveland Municipal, Cincinnati City, Springfield City, Toledo City, Groveport -Madison, Lima City, Oakwood City, Shaker Heights, Warrensville Heights, and Worthington City. But many larger districts provided almost no information. And that presents a credibility problem with the community.

As an example, the Brecksville-Broadview Heights City School District has been highlighted in national articles because parents are outraged about “sexually explicit material” being presented to their children. Yet in the ODE audit, the district gave a vague response with no details.

“Nearly 300,000 Ohio public school students are enrolled in these non-compliant districts—and these are the ones we know about,” said Linda Harvey, president of Mission America. “When children are deceived about basic issues of human sexual development, gender and morality, they become extremely vulnerable. Detrimental outcomes are often the result.”

“Comprehensive sex education” (CSE) may mention abstinence in passing but concentrates on giving students “skills” for contraceptive/condom use, presents an uncritical view of abortion as an alternative, and minimizes the risk of sexually transmitted infections. This approach also teaches about “consent” to sex, focusing on both rejection of sexual contact but also the “right”

for students as young as middle school to consent to sex, which may lead to incidents of criminal sexual assault. K-12 students should never be encouraged to consent to sexual activity. Most CSE programs describe sex acts in detail (vaginal, anal and oral sex) and suggest that these can be performed with minimal risk if “protected,” which is not medically accurate. There is often advocacy of “LGBTQ” conduct, disregarding the known risks of these identities and behaviors and failing to share the known option for change. Many CSE programs are now presented to students as early as 7th grade.

Some school districts did not respond at all to the ODE audit or gave minimal information, which should be a red flag. Local parents need to get involved and encourage those school districts to report, in a spirit of transparency, exactly what they are teaching to children.

To read the entire report, go [HERE](#).