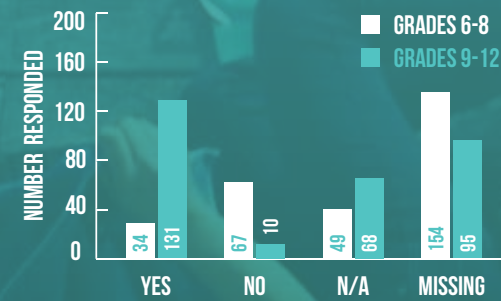
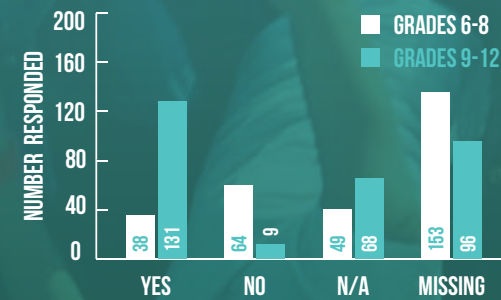


## CHARACTERISTICS OF SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN ALABAMA SECONDARY SCHOOLS

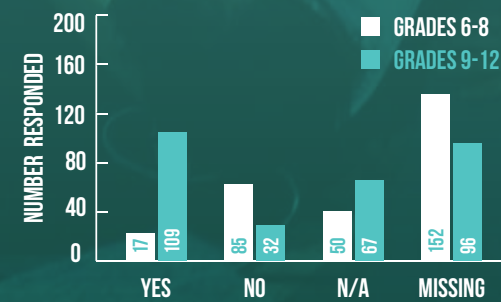
In 2016 (most recent data) the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted the School Health Profiles Survey (Profiles). The survey contained a series of questions related to Characteristics of Health Programs Among Secondary Schools. The survey was completed by 304 Alabama public school Lead Health Education teachers. The Alabama Campaign focused on the Profiles questions related to sexual health education. The following questions were identified as key to understanding the availability and content of sexual health education for Alabama students.



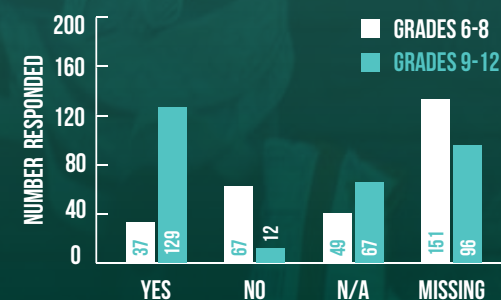
**During this school year, did teachers in your school teach health consequences of HIV, other STDs, and pregnancy in a required course for students?**



**During this school year, did teachers in your school teach the benefits of being sexually abstinent in a required course for students?**



**During this school year, did teachers in your school teach efficacy of condoms, that is, how well condoms work and do not work in a required course for students?**



**During this school year, did teachers in your school teach how to create and sustain healthy and respectful relationships in a required course for students?**

\* "NA" indicates that the school does not contain grades in that grade span. "Missing" indicates that the question was not answered by the survey participant.

## PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE

The Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy believes the information collected through the surveys described in this document clearly demonstrate that progress is possible for the inclusion of sexual health education in Alabama public schools. Sexual health education that is medically-accurate and age-appropriate can, and should be, a core component of the Alabama Course of Study for Health Education. Research confirms that medically-accurate, age-appropriate and comprehensive sexual health education content is effective and provides adolescents with knowledge and skills to avoid sexual risk-taking behaviors. Knowledge and skills that include content such as delaying sexual activity (abstinence) as well as condom and contraceptive use.

## TAKING ACTION

As advocates for the health and well-being of children and youth in Alabama it is critical that we encourage Alabama policy-makers to insist on the delivery of medically-accurate and age-appropriate sexual health education. We can take the following action steps:

1. Develop a personal advocacy message supporting sexual health education. <http://acptp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/A-Handy-Guide-to-Crafting-Your-Message.pdf>
2. Contact policy-makers at the national, state, county and local levels and insist upon the delivery of medically-accurate and age-appropriate sexual health education. <http://acptp.org/advocacy/>
3. Engage the community and build a network of youth, adults, and community leaders supportive of sexual health education in local schools.
4. Attend local school board meetings and ask direct questions about existing content related to mandated HIV education in grades 5-12. <https://www.alsde.edu/sec/sct/COS/HEALTH%202009%20---FINAL.pdf>
5. Share local knowledge about existing sexual health education in Alabama schools with the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy for their use in continuing advocacy efforts related to sexual health education.
6. Follow the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy to obtain resources and news related to sexual health education. [facebook.com/acptp](https://facebook.com/acptp) | [twitter.com/AlabamaCampaign](https://twitter.com/AlabamaCampaign)



## IN SUMMARY

Building the capacity of young people to develop healthy relationships, communicate their expectations within a relationship, make informed decisions about their health and relationships and access reproductive health care services is an essential element to overall adolescent health.

Students in Alabama have voiced their need for sexual health education in Alabama public schools. Parents support the delivery of sexual health education in Alabama public schools. Community leaders believe sexual health education is important to the health and well-being of young people, their families and the community. Take action - support sexual health education in Alabama public schools as a fundamental element of overall adolescent health.



# EDUCATING AND EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE

PARENTS

COMMUNITIES

SCHOOLS

...we envision healthy youth with the skills as  
adults to build strong families and communities.



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STRENGTHEN



COMMUNITY



# REDUCING TEEN PREGNANCY BY SUPPORTING YOUTH IN MAKING INFORMED SEXUAL HEALTH DECISIONS.

THE ALABAMA CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY VALUES YOUNG PEOPLE AND WHAT THEY BRING TO OUR LIVES. BELOW ARE FIVE KEY AREAS THAT GUIDE OUR WORK AND WE BELIEVE ARE CRITICAL TO HEALTHY YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.



## KNOWLEDGE

Young people should have the knowledge and skills to enter healthy and satisfying relationships throughout their lives. ACPTP values youth as assets in our communities and believes in their capacity to make positive choices when they are informed, educated, and empowered by supportive communities.

## RESOURCES

Parents want resources and educational opportunities to empower their youth to make healthy relationship decisions. ACPTP values access to medically-accurate and complete reproductive health information and care and the implementation of teen pregnancy prevention programs that are evidence-based and proven effective in changing risk-taking behavior.

## SKILLS

Youth serving professionals need training and professional development opportunities to build their capacity to talk about sexual health with young people. ACPTP values the participation of parents, caregivers, community-based organizations, schools, faith communities, and policy makers in addressing teen pregnancy and responsible parenting.

## POLICY

Policy makers should hear from constituents about the importance of policy and funding to support comprehensive sexual health education in Alabama. ACPTP values the diversity of opinion and the power of working in partnership to affect positive change and the role of advocacy to raise awareness and open dialogue about public policies affecting youth health issues.

## PARTNERSHIP

Partners in this work value our contribution to their efforts to build the capacity of the youth they serve to lead sexually healthy lives. ACPTP values the investment in teen pregnancy prevention and services for pregnant and parenting youth for the development of healthy families and strong communities.

The Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy is leading Alabama in embracing evidence informed sexual health education as critical to healthy youth development.

Findings in this resource came from activities related to the Alabama Campaign's Public Policy Project. More information can be found at [acptp.org/resources/fact-sheets-and-reports/](http://acptp.org/resources/fact-sheets-and-reports/).

## ALABAMA COMMUNITY LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES REGARDING SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN ALABAMA COMMUNITIES

376 ACROSS 50  
RESPONDENTS OF 67  
COUNTIES

When asked, **"What would be ideal sexual health education for young people in your community?"**

82.5%  
EXPRESS

82.5% express the opinion that sexual health education should include more than abstinence.

When asked **why they thought this** would be ideal for the young people in their community...

85.0%  
RESPONDED

Over 85% responded it was because young people are engaging in sexual risk-taking behaviors and need this information.

\* 2017 survey conducted by the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, with support from Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education Children's Policy Councils.



## OF PARENTS WITH CHILDREN CURRENTLY IN ALABAMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS...

82.7%  
BELIEVE

82.7% believe children should be taught sex education in school.

92.5%  
BELIEVE

92.5% believe sex education should first be taught by the ninth grade, with 52.7% believing sex education should first be taught by sixth grade.

97.5%  
BELIEVE

97.5% believe it is somewhat important or very important that their children learn to talk with a partner about birth control and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

98.1%  
BELIEVE

98.1% believe it is somewhat important or very important that their children learn about the use of condoms.

99.4%  
BELIEVE

99.4% believe it is very important that their children learn about the transmission and prevention of HIV and AIDS.



## ALABAMA STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES REGARDING SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN ALABAMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

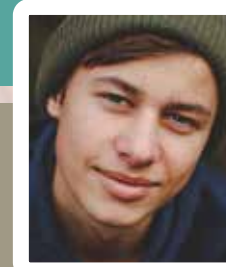
In Fall 2017, two groups of **109 total students from Alabama public schools** were interviewed by The FOCUS Program, with support from the Alabama Campaign. The **five themes that emerged** are as follows...

#1

### LACK OF SEXUAL HEALTH TOPICS TAUGHT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Many students indicated that **no sexual health topics are taught in their school.**

One student said he learned everything he needed to know about sex from television.



### VARIOUS MESSAGES ABOUT SEXUAL HEALTH GIVEN BY PARENTS, FRIENDS & SCHOOLS

Of the students who discussed sexual health with their parents, students indicated that their **parents talked more about "having safe sex" than "abstinence"**.

"Some of our friends encourage us to have sex."

#2

### SOME SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION PROVIDED BY PARENTS

Some students said they have candid conversations with parents/caregivers and others said they do not discuss sex with their parents/caregivers.

**Some students stated they would like to have more support from their parents and be able to just talk about safe sex and means of obtaining condoms.**

#3

### STUDENTS WANT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SEXUAL HEALTH TOPICS

Students expressed that they wish there would be more taught on sexual health topics.

**The students all agreed that an actual formal class that consisted of more than one discussion would be beneficial.**



#4

#5

### IDEAL SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION WOULD INCLUDE GOOD TEACHERS & MORE ABOUT PREVENTION METHODS

Participants stated that ideal sexual health education would teach "how to prevent STDs, how to properly use condoms, and to be cautious when having sex."

"Help us understand our risks."

\* A 2017 survey conducted by the University of South Alabama, with support from the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

Full report can be viewed at [acptp.org/resources/fact-sheets-and-reports/](http://acptp.org/resources/fact-sheets-and-reports/)

