

RESOLUTION NUMBER: C- 07

REFERRED TO: Reference Committee on Public and Occupational Health

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Reproductive Health Education in South Carolina

SUBMITTED BY: Allie Conry, Madeline Holt, Caitlin Reynolds, Haley Wymbys

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1           **WHEREAS;** in South Carolina, there is no legal requirement for health education to be  
2 medically accurate or comprehensive;<sup>1</sup> and

3           **WHEREAS;** instruction regarding contraception is optional for sexual health education  
4 and STD Prevention;<sup>1</sup> and

5           **WHEREAS;** schools in South Carolina are not required to teach about human  
6 immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS);<sup>1</sup> and

7           **WHEREAS;** group-based comprehensive risk reduction is an effective strategy in  
8 reducing adolescent pregnancy, HIV and STIs;<sup>2</sup> and

9           **WHEREAS;** South Carolina was ranked the 4th highest state for rate per 100,000 of  
10 Chlamydia and 3rd highest state for rate per 100,000 of gonorrhea in 2020;<sup>3</sup> and

11           **WHEREAS;** according to South Carolina Code Annotated 59-32-10, “‘Reproductive  
12 health education’ means instruction in human physiology, conception, prenatal care and  
13 development, childbirth, and postnatal care, but it does not include instruction concerning sexual  
14 practices outside marriage or practices unrelated to reproduction except within the context of the  
15 risk of disease. Abstinence and the risks associated with sexual activity outside of marriage must  
16 be strongly emphasized”;<sup>4</sup> and

17           **WHEREAS;** pending South Carolina House Bill 3890 “aims to remove the requirement  
18 to stress abstinence within sex education instruction or only discuss sexual practices in the context  
19 of marriage. Requires curriculum to include nonjudgmental instruction on the barrier and hormonal

20 methods of contraception and include instruction on consent education and the recognition and  
21 prevention of sexual assault and abuse”;<sup>5</sup> and

22 **WHEREAS;** South Carolina House Bill 5483 introduced in 2022 Enacts Reproductive  
23 Health Act, which aims to change the definition of reproductive health education to include “age  
24 appropriate, unbiased, comprehensive, and medically accurate” and also adding that abstinence  
25 and sexual activity outside of marriage cannot be only form of contraception instruction provided;<sup>6</sup>  
26 and

27 **WHEREAS;** according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, comprehensive sex  
28 education that includes topics such as healthy sexual decision making, and STI/HIV prevention  
29 can improve the well-being of adolescents;<sup>7</sup> and

30 **WHEREAS;** according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, comprehensive sex  
31 education offered in schools can lead to delay in initiation of sex, decreased frequency of sexual  
32 intercourse, more frequent condom use, and decreased sexual partners;<sup>8</sup> therefore, be it

33 **RESOLVED;** that our SCMA will advocate for the requirement of a developmentally  
34 appropriate, comprehensive and medically accurate reproductive health education curriculum that  
35 includes, but is not limited to: sexual health, abstinence, STD prevention, HIV prevention,  
36 contraception, and reduction of risky sexual behaviors.

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References:

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Guide to Community Preventive Services. *Am J Prev Med.* 2012 Mar;42(3):272-94. doi: 10.1016/j.amepre.2011.11.006. PMID: 22341164.

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<https://www.cdc.gov/std/statistics/2020/tables/2020-STD-Surveillance-State-Ranking-Tables.pdf>
4. Code of laws - Title 59 - Chapter 32 - Comprehensive Health Education Program. (n.d.).  
<https://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c032.php>
5. 2021-2022 Bill 3890 text of previous version (Feb. 16, 2021) - South Carolina legislature online. [https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess124\\_2021-022/prever/3890\\_20210216.htm](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess124_2021-022/prever/3890_20210216.htm)
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7. Breuner, Cora C., Gerri Mattson, William P. Adelman, Elizabeth M. Alderman, Robert Garofalo, Arik V. Marcell, Makia E. Powers et al. "Sexuality education for children and adolescents." *Pediatrics* 138, no. 2 (2016).
8. Breuner, Cora C., Gerri Mattson, William P. Adelman, Elizabeth M. Alderman, Robert Garofalo, Arik V. Marcell, Makia E. Powers et al. "Sexuality education for children and adolescents." *Pediatrics* 138, no. 2 (2016).