

Sexuality Education in Colorado: A Moving Picture

Presented to Raising The Bar, October 2011



The **Healthy Colorado Youth**
Alliance

colorado
YOUTH
matter

True/False



About The Healthy Colorado Youth Alliance (The Alliance)

Statewide coalition working to increase access to comprehensive sexual health education, resources and services for youth throughout Colorado.

- Education
- Community Organizing
- Policy Advocacy
- Movement-Building

Informed Youth. Responsible Decisions. Healthy Lives.



About Colorado Youth Matter

Engage Colorado Communities to Promote the Sexual and Reproductive Health of All Teens and Advance the Well-being of parenting teens

- o Provide training and technical assistance
- o Advocate and raise awareness of comp evidence-based sex ed programs and services
- o Ensure opportunity and equity for all youth and especially teen parents



Snapshot Purpose

- ✓ To assess the amount of sexuality and HIV prevention education (“comprehensive sex ed”) and policies being implemented throughout Colorado
- ✓ Determine if the education and policies meet the standards of state laws and CDE’s content standards.
- ✓ To determine any changes between the original survey in 2009 and 2011



Sex Ed in Colorado: A Recent Timeline



2007: Content Standards for the Instruction of Human Sexuality (HB 07-1292)

2008: Education Alignment Act (SB 08-212)

2009: CDE creates first-ever state standards for comprehensive health education

2009: CYM conducts first statewide 'snapshot'

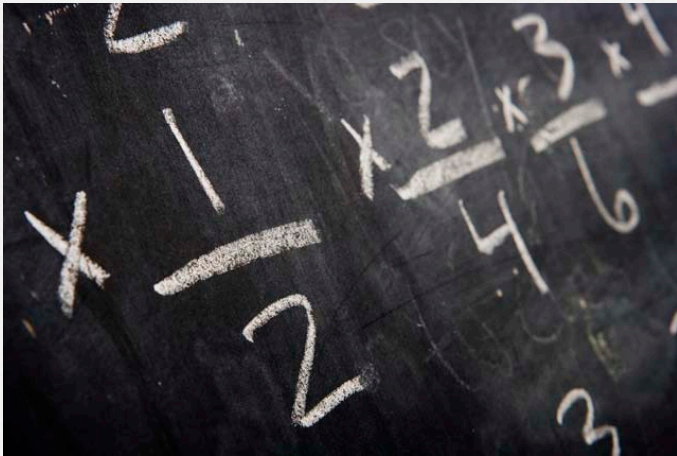
2010: Federal funding opportunities for teen pregnancy prevention come to Colorado

2011: CYM, The Alliance conduct 'snapshot' update

2012: CDPHE State Plan for Youth Sexual Health

The Numbers Tell a Story

- 33 states and DC mandate HIV education
- 21 states and DC mandate sex ed



- In 2008, Colorado had the 23rd highest teen birth rate in the U.S.

Participation

- o 2011 Online Survey:

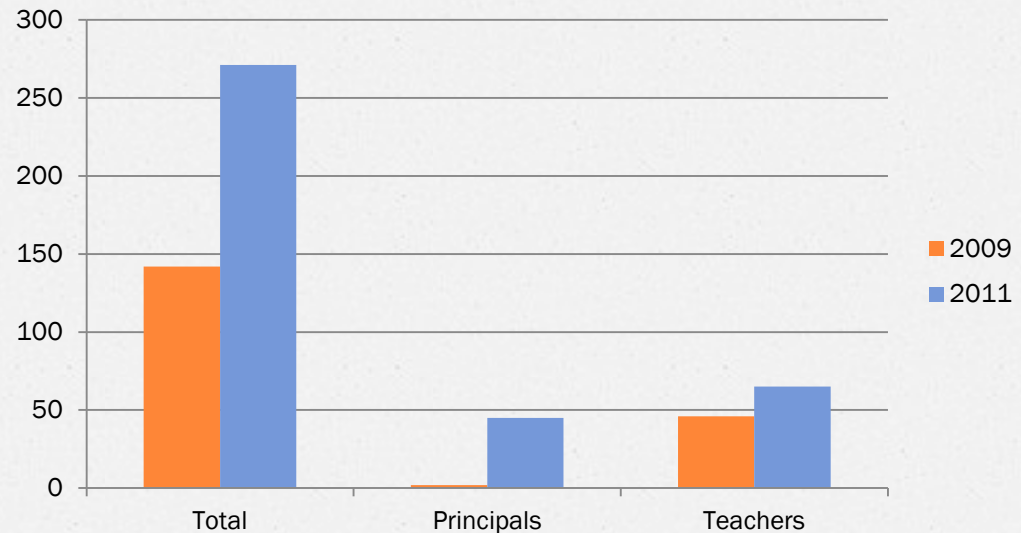
- o 45 Principals

- o Over 35 counties represented

- o 65 Teachers

- o 271 total

Overall Survey participation



Caveats and Limitations

- o Not a formal research study
- o Total time line was 6 months
- o Sample not same as 2009 – compare trends
- o Not representative of entire state of Colorado



Methods

2009 Snapshot included:

- Online school district HIV/AIDS and sex ed policy search
- Online survey (developed through Survey Monkey)
- Telephone key informant interviews

Analysis:

Rural vs. urban respondent comparative analysis using descriptive and bivariate statistics.

2011 Snapshot included:

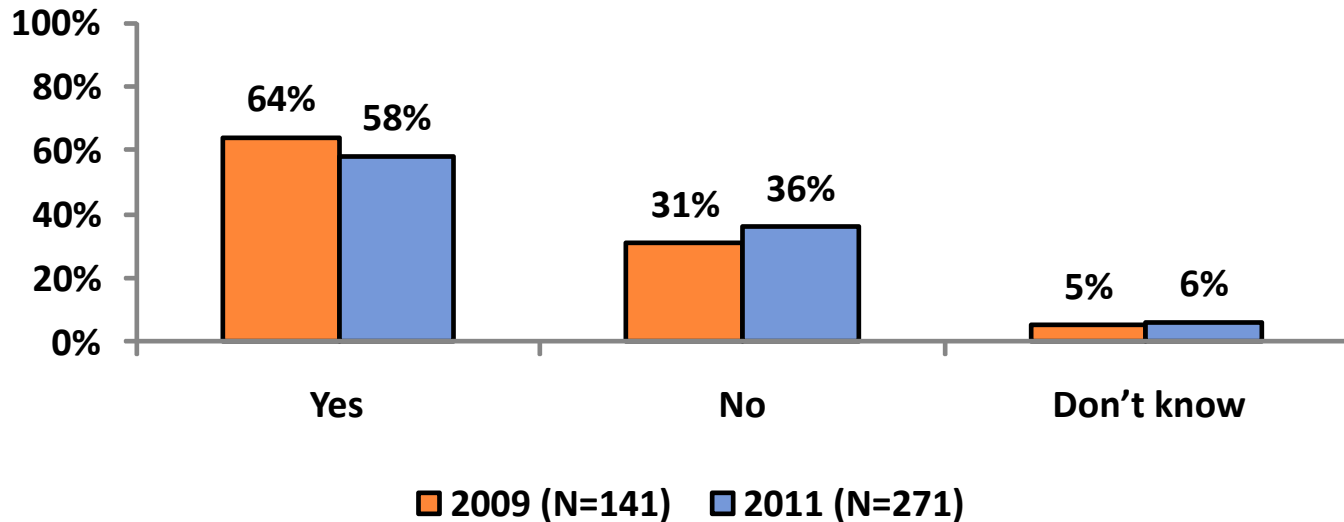
- Online survey – one for teachers, one for administrators
- Targeted follow-up with school administrators

Analysis:

Rural and Urban, Sex Ed and HIV Ed were not separated due to little difference between categories

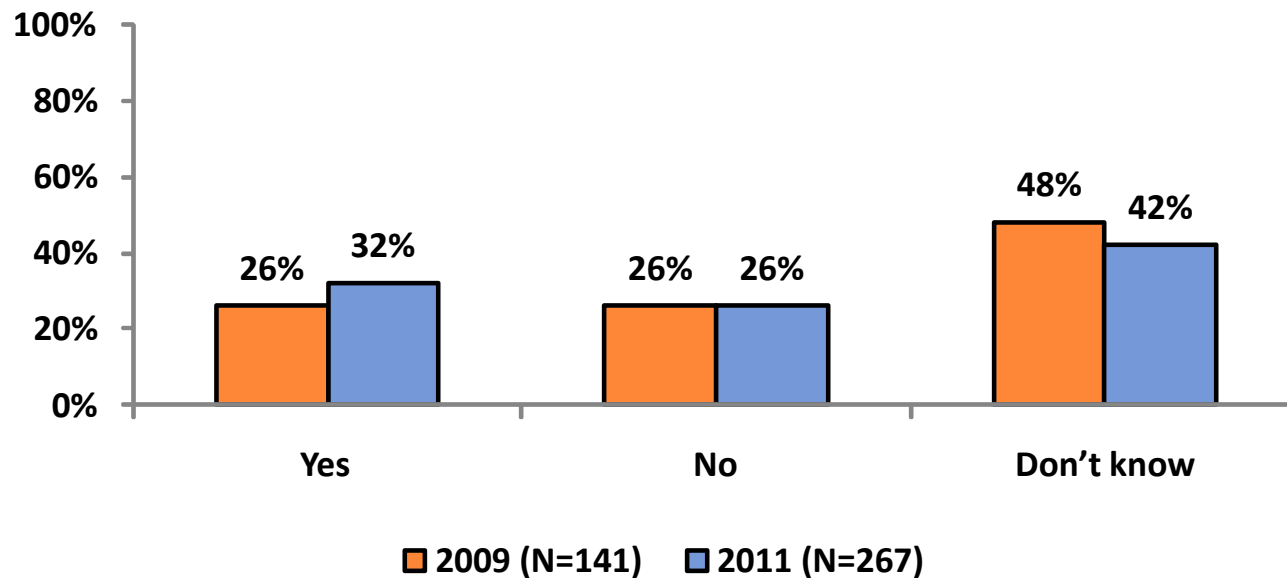
Summary of Findings: Policies

**Are you familiar with House Bill 071292
which outlines standards for the
instruction human sexuality in schools?**



Summary of Findings: Policies

Does your school have a written policy related to HIV prevention education?



Summary of Findings: Services

Which of the following services are available at your school?	2009 (N = 123)	2011 (N = 271)*
HIV and/or testing	6%	13%
Family planning	7%	13%
Adolescent immunizations	10%	17%
Mental health counseling and/or treatment	25%	27%
Substance abuse prevention and/or treatment	11%	17%
None of the above	38%	18%
I don't know	3%	8%

Summary of Findings: Content

Which of the following does the instructor use at your school to deliver instruction on sexuality education?	2009 (N = 70)	2011 (N = 165)
A replication of one published program/curriculum in its entirety	17%	13%
A combination or parts of several published programs/curricula	43%	41%
A program created by the organizations/school/teacher, not using a published program/curricula	40%	23%
Curricula from an outside agency	0%	13%
Other	0%	10%

What is an Evidence-Based Program?

- o It is a program that:
 - o Research has *shown it is effective in changing sexual risk-taking behaviors* as well as knowledge and attitudes
 - o The evaluations were rigorous and were accepted and published in peer-reviewed academic journals.
 - o Has been replicated and evaluated in different locations with similar results.
 - o The program evaluation was conducted using an experimental or quasi-experimental design with an adequate sample size.



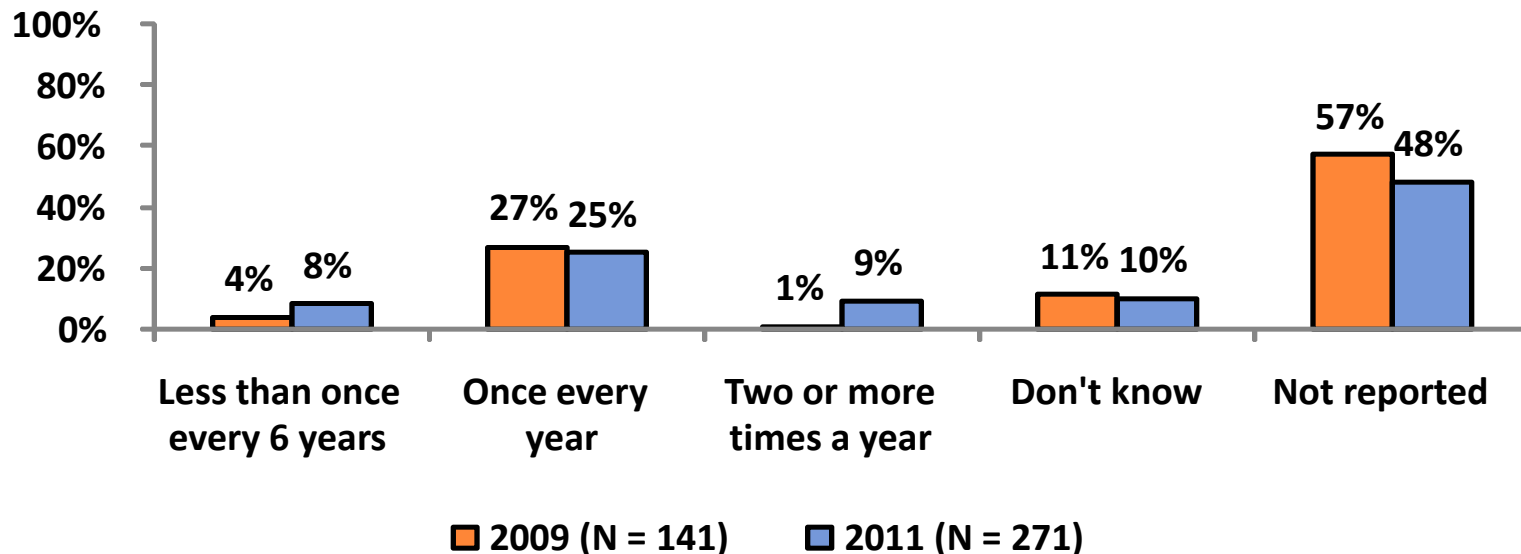
Categories of Programs

Categories of Published programs



Summary of Findings: Professional Development

How often does the instructor(s) of the sexuality and/or HIV/AIDS education classes receive professional development or training opportunities related to this subject?



Recommendation #1

Provide frequent & ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers

- o Identify an organization or agency who oversees and provides ongoing statewide training on adolescent sexual health education.
- o Provide sufficient time, resources and support for instruction of sexual health education.

Recommendation #2

Emphasize the critical link between health outcomes and academic success

- o Talk early and talk often.
- o Make comprehensive sexual health education/evidence-based programming a priority in all Colorado school districts.
- o Increase participation in research and evaluation efforts.

Recommendation #3

Make policy practical

- o Hold Colorado state agencies and elected officials accountable for prioritizing healthy youth and for funding prevention efforts that work – and save money.
- o In the absence of funded mandates, support local schools in using existing state law, standards and local resources to implement evidence-based programs.
- o Implement an ‘opt-out’ parental consent process in each school district.

Recommendation #4

Increase access to comprehensive sexual health services in all Colorado communities

- Strengthen collaboration and referral networks within and among schools, school-based health centers, local health providers, and communities.
- Include information on comprehensive health resources and services in comprehensive sex ed, and vice versa.
- Emphasize how sexual health is a core component of comprehensive health.

ACTIVITY

- o Break into 4 groups, 1 per recommendation
- o Discuss rationale – why is this recommendation important? What changes would you make, if any, to this recommendation?
- o Develop 3-5 action steps – what needs to happen to make this recommendation a practical reality in your community?
- o Report back.



Next Steps

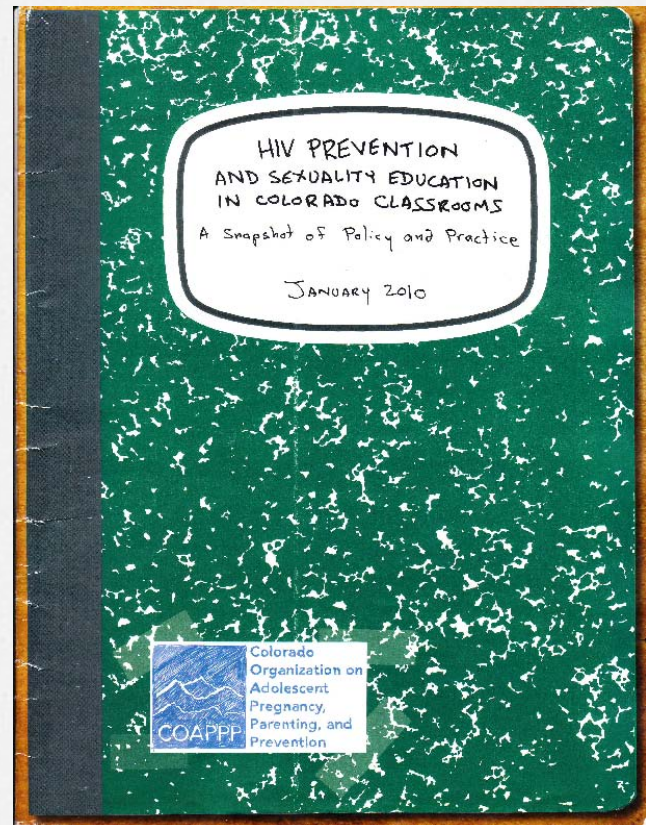
- Continue to increase support for and knowledge about effective and evidence-based programs
- Continue building state-community partnerships to advance youth sexual health
- Provide technical assistance on health program planning and implementation – CYM
- Provide statewide coordination, community engagement and sustainability strategies – The Alliance
- Repeat assessment every 2-3 years



For the 2010 Snapshot, *HIV Prevention and Sexuality Education in Colorado Classrooms*

[www.coloradoyouthmatter.org/
publications](http://www.coloradoyouthmatter.org/publications)

*Visit Colorado Youth Matter and
The Healthy Colorado Youth Alliance
websites for the 2011 update,
coming soon!*



Thank You!

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