

HB 822 MODERNIZES GEORGIA'S COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION LAW

The Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential (GCAPP) believes that sex education supports healthy youth and is in support of House Bill 822, introduced by Representative Kasey Carpenter (R-Dalton). House Bill 822 proposes to update and modernize the current comprehensive sex education law by adding several key components:

- Requires the course of study to be delivered to “age-appropriate” students
- Requires the local school district to choose a curriculum that is medically accurate as defined in the bill
- Requires instruction on “consent”

SEX ED IN GEORGIA:

- Sex education is required in Georgia but it is *not* required to be age appropriate and medically accurate.
- Implementation guidance states that curricula must stress abstinence until marriage as an important personal goal.

Individual school districts in Georgia are left to decide what is taught, resulting in inconsistent instruction, which leads to underprepared young people who are more at risk for unplanned pregnancy, higher STI and HIV rates, and higher incidences of intimate partner violence



GUIDELINES FROM SEX ED POLICIES IN OTHER SOUTHERN STATES

- **Virginia:** “age-appropriate elements of effective and evidence-based programs”
- **Tennessee:** “medically accurate and age appropriate”
- **Alabama:** “course instruction should be age appropriate and medically accurate”
- **North Carolina:** “shall be age appropriate and objective and based upon scientific research that is peer reviewed and accepted by professionals in the field.”

ABOUT GCAPP:

GCAPP is a statewide adolescent health organization that ensures young people have the information, knowledge, skills, and motivation they need to maximize their potential. Partnering with 300+ schools and youth-serving organizations in five program areas (teen pregnancy prevention, comprehensive sex ed, parent engagement, youth empowerment, and physical activity & nutrition) GCAPP helps youth mitigate risks that often result in negative consequences that are difficult to overcome.

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THE IMPACT OF COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION ON ADOLESCENT HEALTH OUTCOMES IN GEORGIA

Georgia is one of 14 'WISE' states (Working to Institutionalize Sex Education), a national initiative that supports school districts in implementing effective sex ed. WISE Georgia, based on 15 years of best practice research and led by GCAPP, helps schools identify, select, and implement a comprehensive sex ed curriculum of their choosing, and provides ongoing support and trainings to maintain the curriculum over time.

When comparing teen birth rates and pregnancy rates across WISE districts and non-WISE districts, data shows that adolescents from WISE counties have experienced a larger decrease in these rates than adolescents from non-WISE counties (i.e. from 2009-2020 the percentage is greater for WISE than non-WISE schools). Additionally, both groups experienced an increase in STI rates, however, the WISE group experienced just a 3% increase while the non-WISE group experienced a 20% increase.

IMPACT COMPARISON CHARTS

WISE COUNTIES:

Fulton, Bibb, Bulloch, Chatham, Clarke, Crawford, DeKalb, Dougherty, Glynn, Grady, Rockdale, Walton

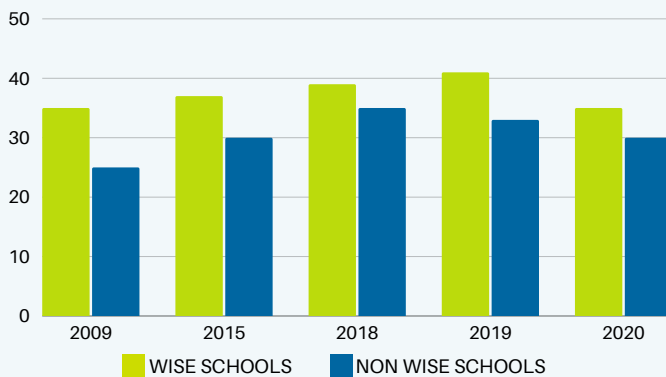
NON- WISE COUNTIES:

Clayton, Houston, Bryan, Liberty, Gwinnett, Macon, Fayette, Colquitt, Camden, Decatur, Morgan, Newton

TEEN STI RATES

The STI Rate for youth ages 15-19 across WISE districts increased slightly (by 3%) from 2009-2020. Meanwhile, non-WISE districts experienced a greater increase (by **20%**) in STI rates from 2009-2020.

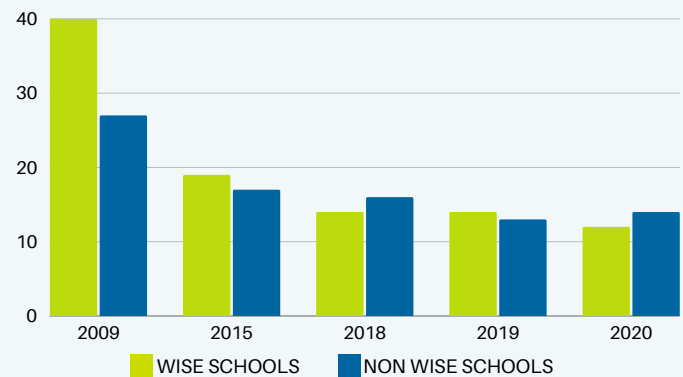
STI Rates from 2009-2020: Per 1,000



TEEN PREGNANCY RATES

The Teen Pregnancy Rate for youth ages 15-19 declined for both WISE and non-Wise districts from 2009-2020; however, WISE districts experienced a greater decline (by **69%**).

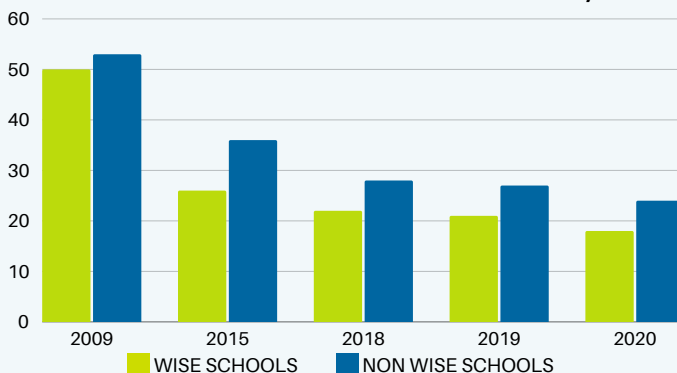
Teen Pregnancy Rates from 2009-2020: Per 1,000



TEEN BIRTH RATES

The Teen Birth Rate for youth ages 15-19 declined for both WISE and non-Wise districts from 2009-2020; however, WISE districts experienced a greater decline (by **64%**).

Teen Birth Rates Rates from 2009-2020: Per 1,000



IMPORTANT & RELEVANT FACTS:

57% of students have had sex by the time they graduate high school.

Youth in Georgia (15 – 24 years old) make up **58%** of all STI cases in the state.