

# What Do Mississippi Parents Think About Sex- Related Education in the Public Schools?

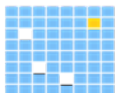
Teen Pregnancy Prevention Summit  
Jackson, MS  
December 8, 2011



# Survey Methodology

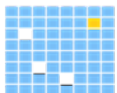
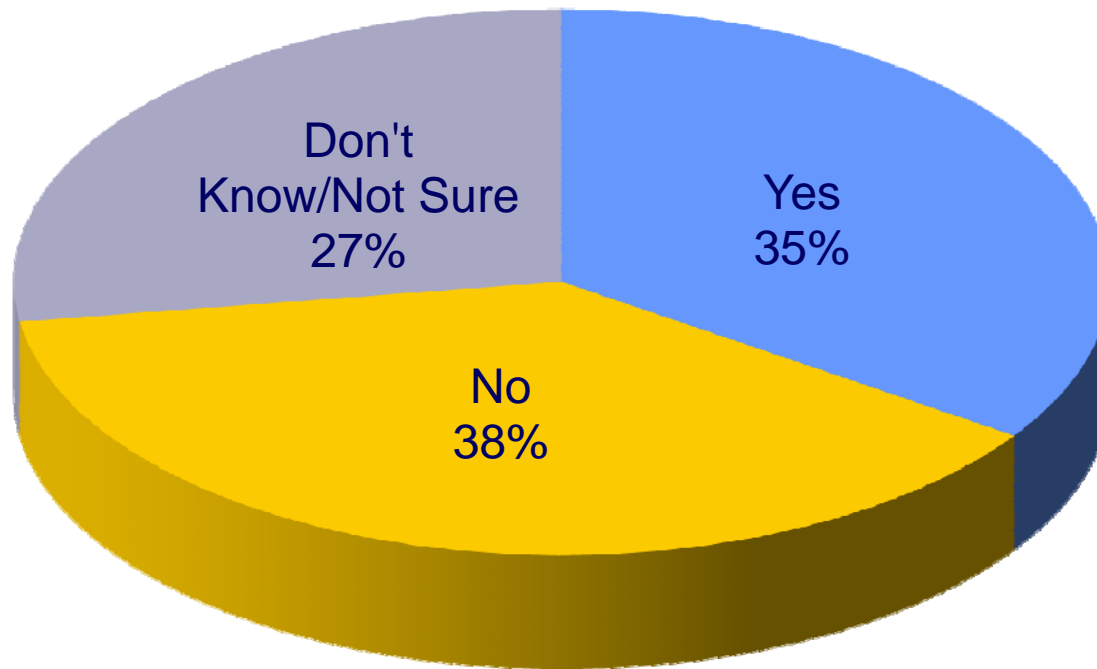


- Conducted by Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center
- Surveyed 3600 parents/guardians of public school students in Mississippi
  - Conducted September – October 2011
  - Representative sample statewide
  - Results representative by public health district
- Sampling error of  $\pm 3.5\%$  with a 95% confidence interval



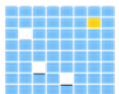
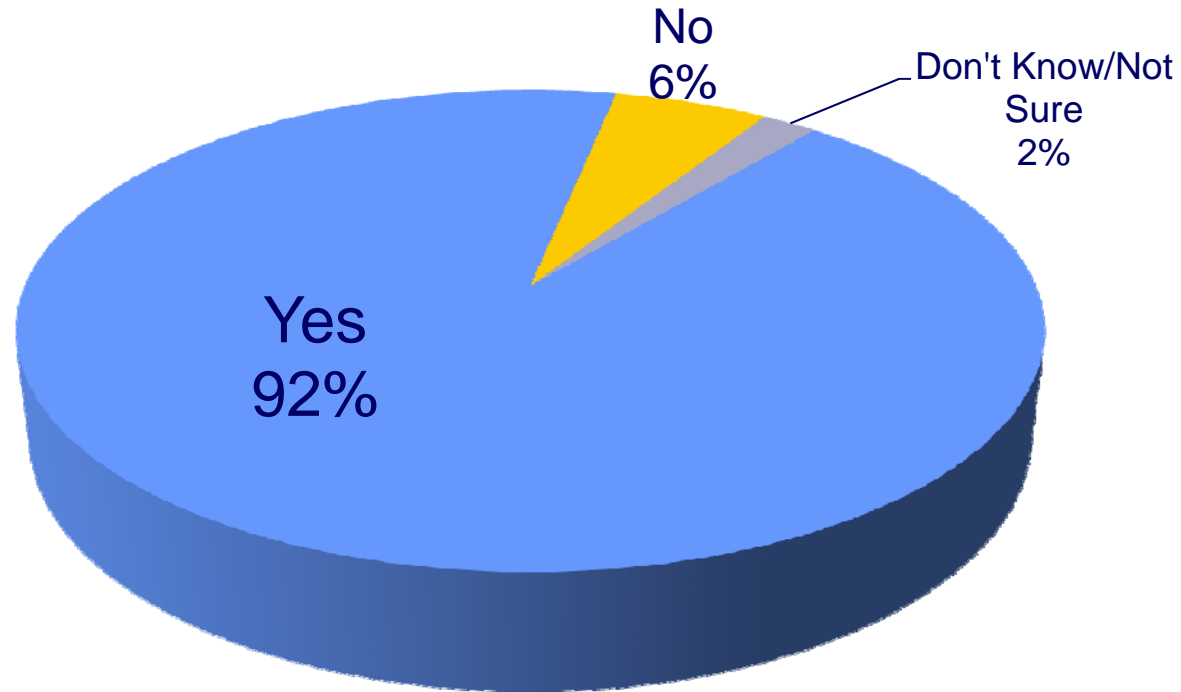
# Is sex-related education taught in your school district?

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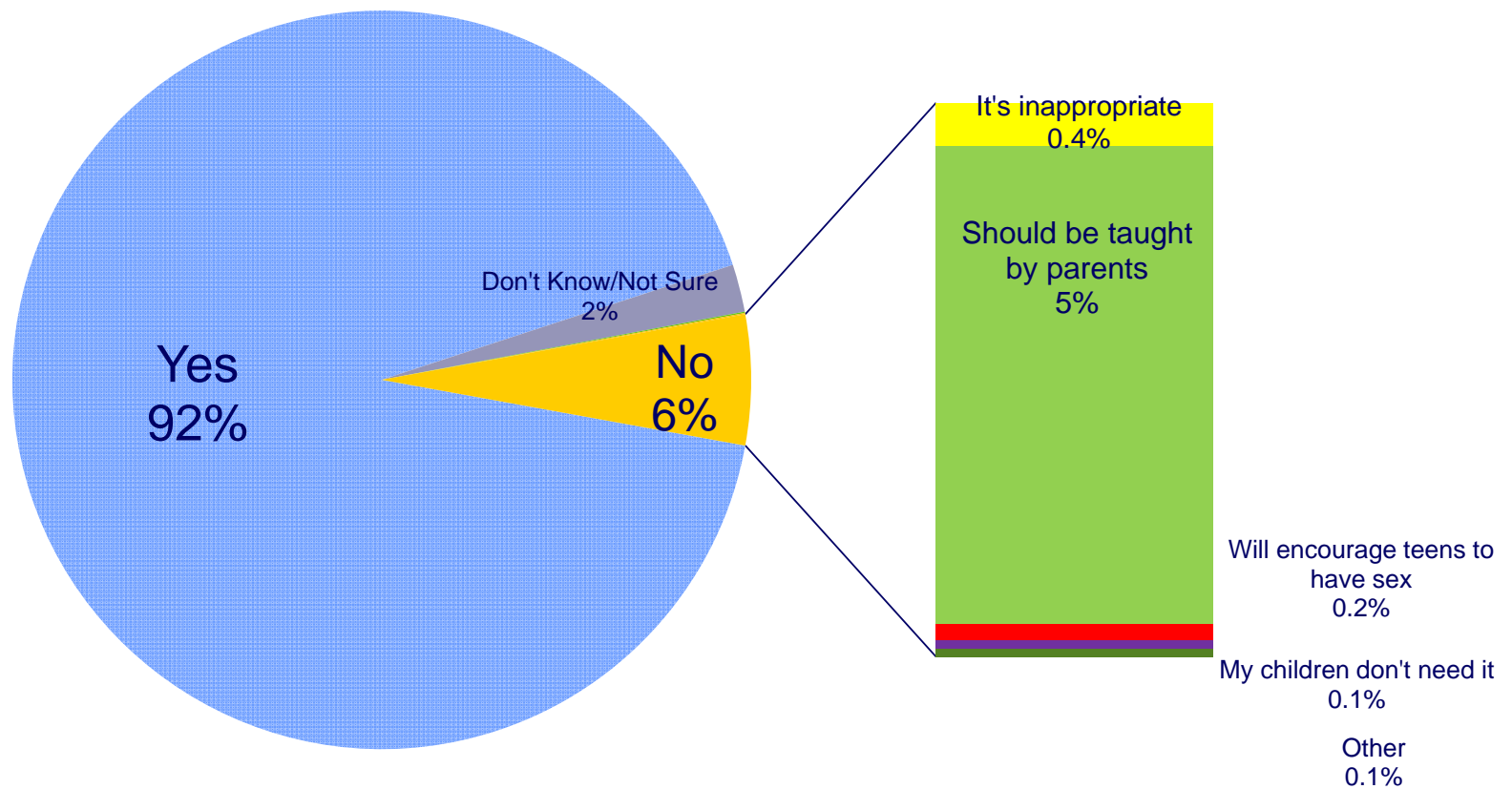


In your opinion, should sex-related education be taught in the Mississippi public school system, at an age-appropriate grade level?

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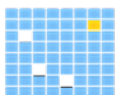
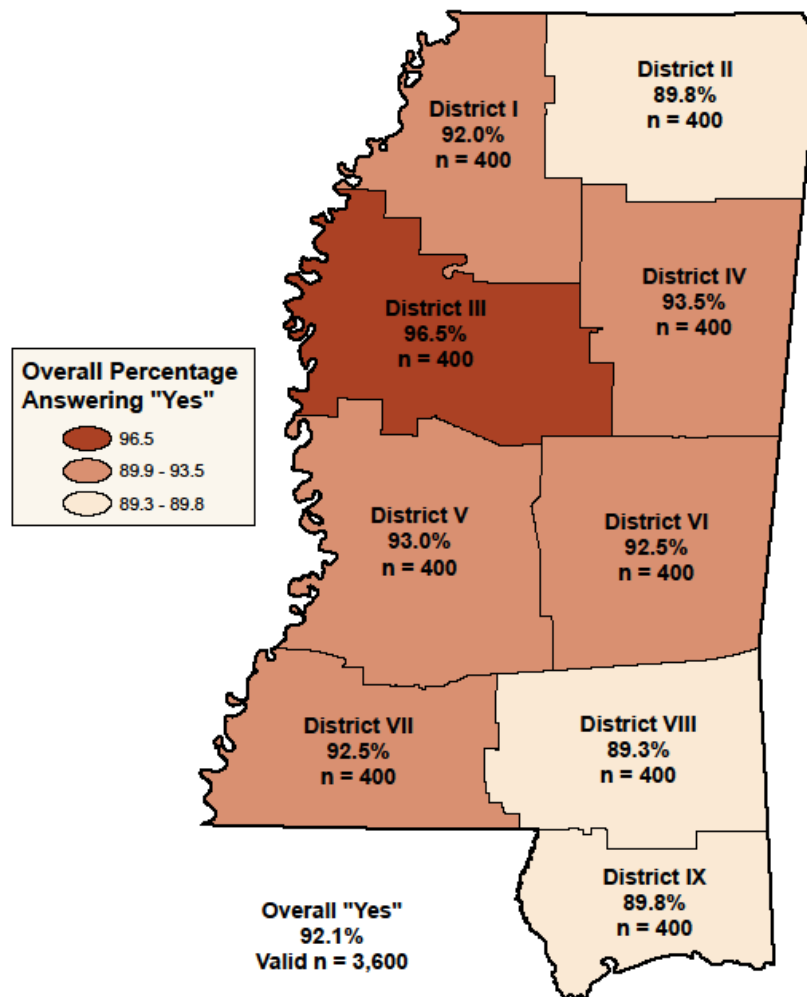


# In your opinion, should sex-related education be taught in the Mississippi public school system, at an age-appropriate grade level? If no, why?

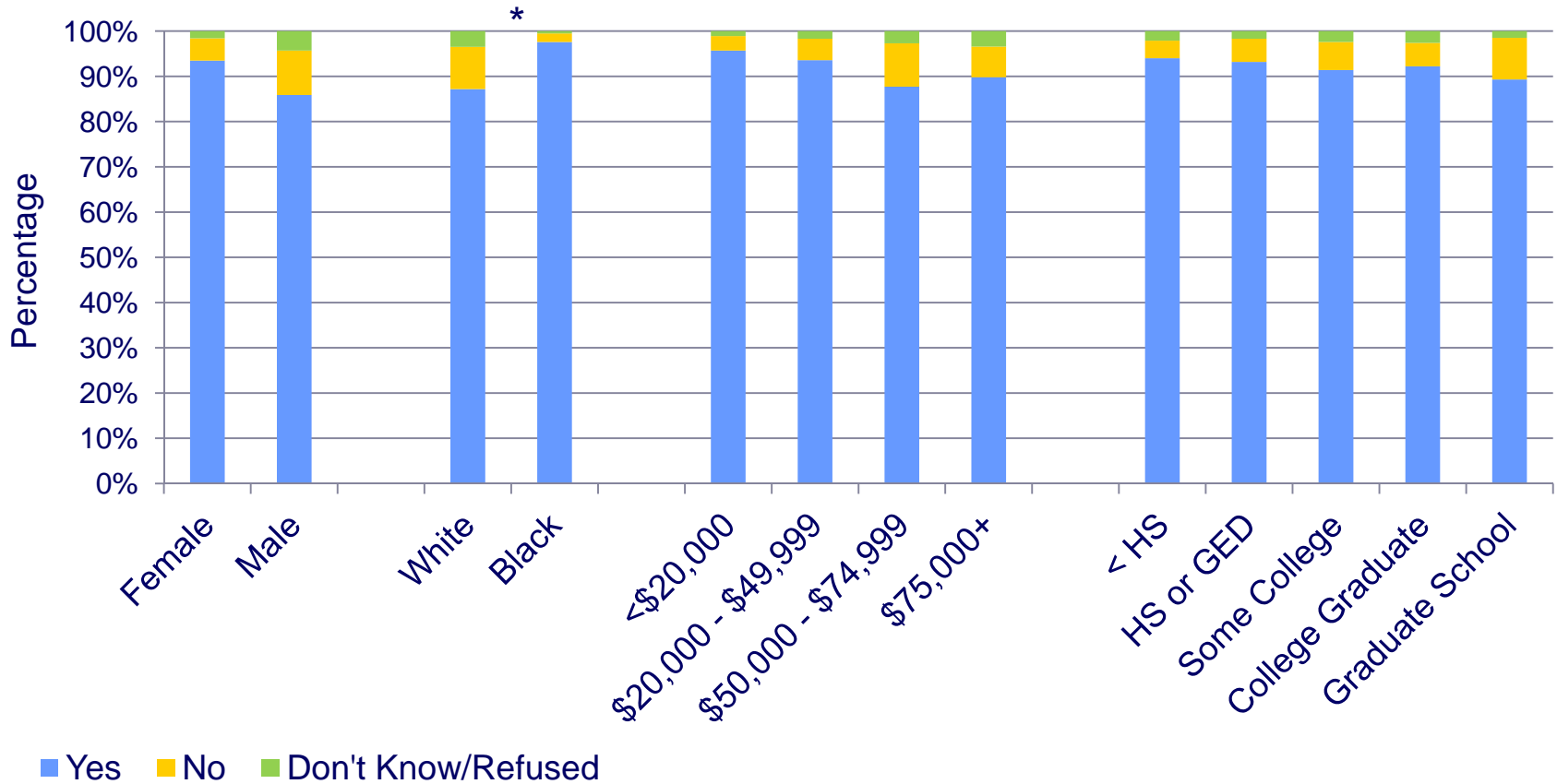


Percentage of Parents Who Support Teaching Sex-related Education in the Mississippi Public School System  
2011

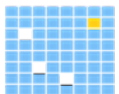
# Variation by Public Health District



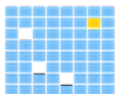
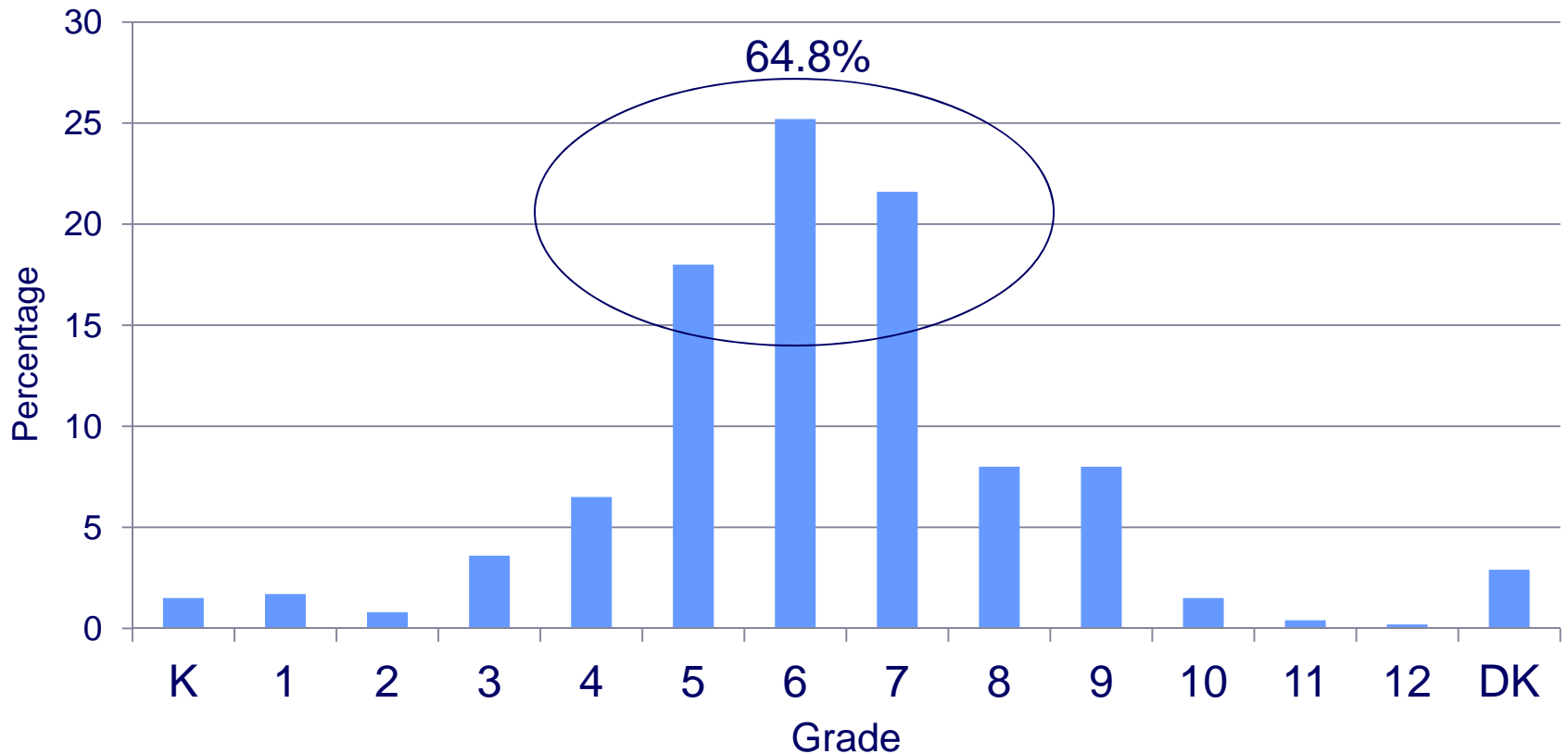
# Variations by Demographic Characteristics



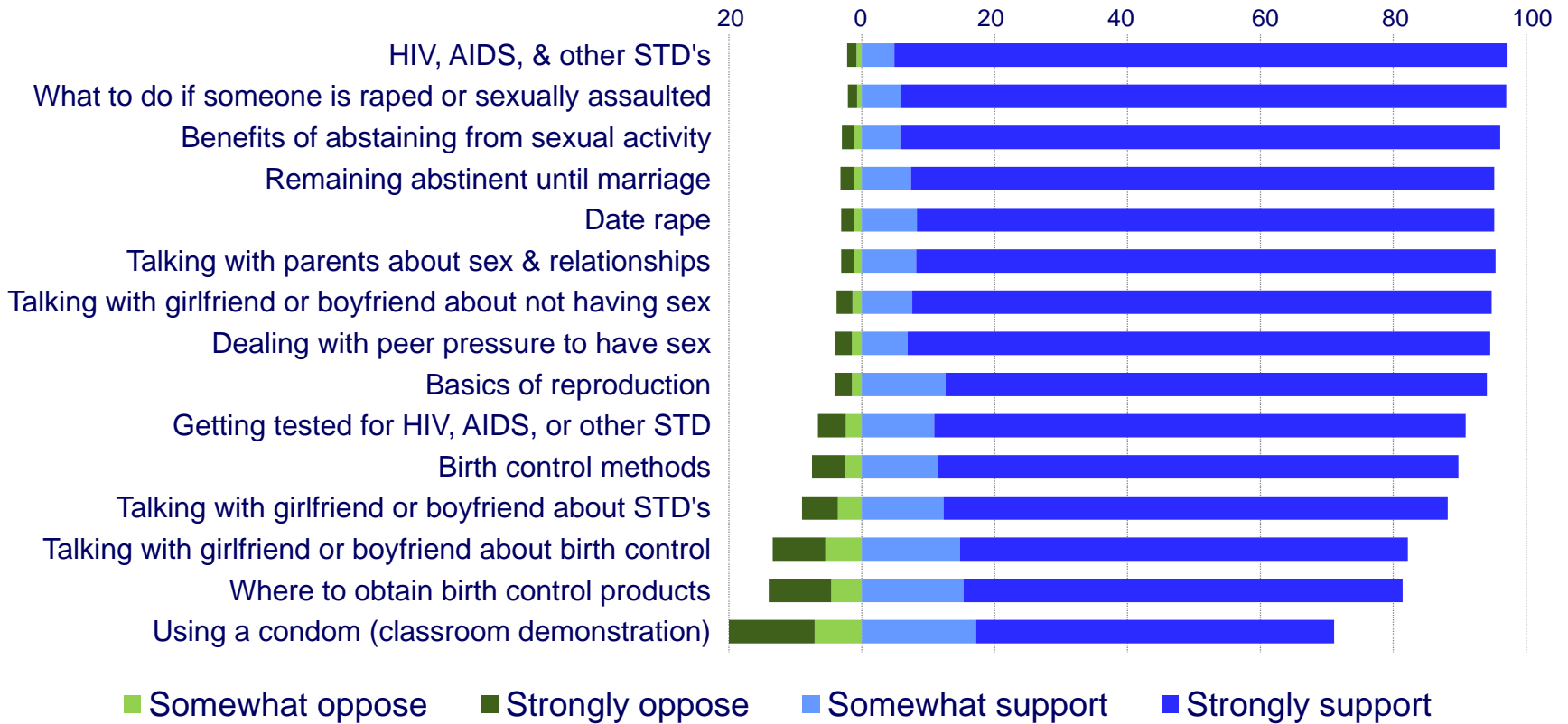
\*Statistically significant  $p < 0.001$



# At what grade level do you think that sex-related education should first be taught?

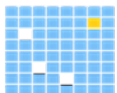
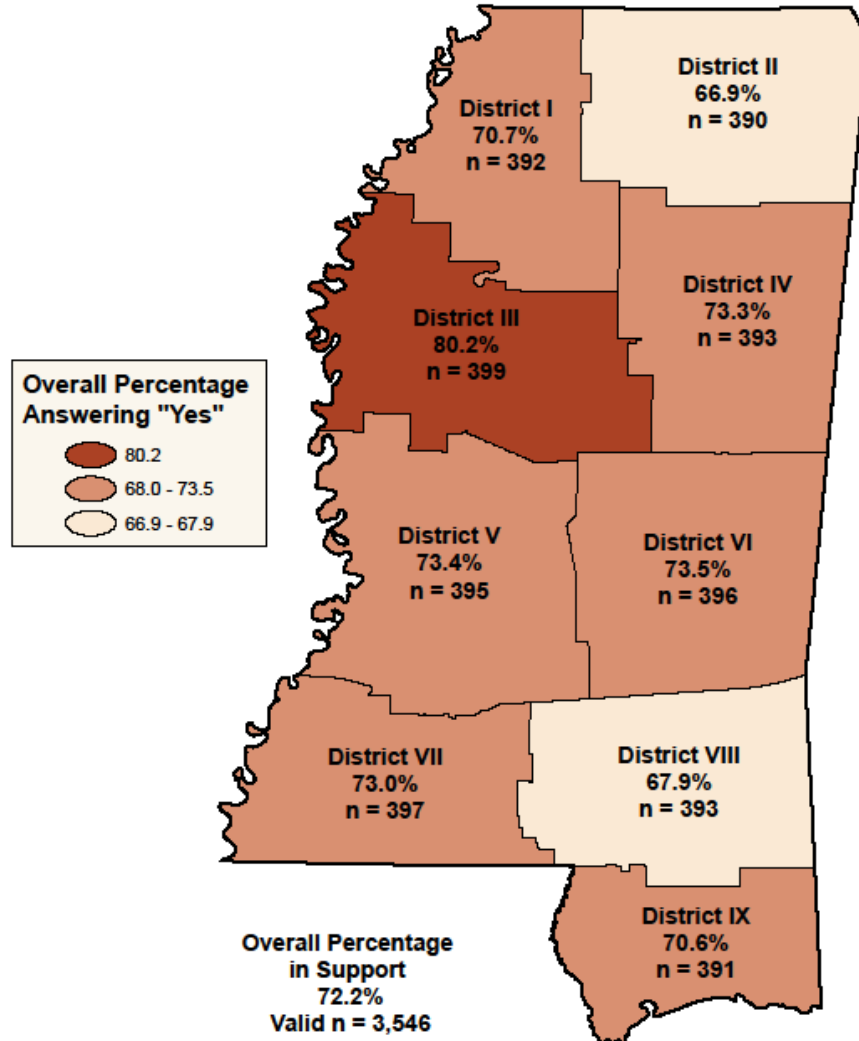


# Do you support these topics being taught in school?



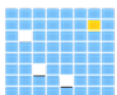
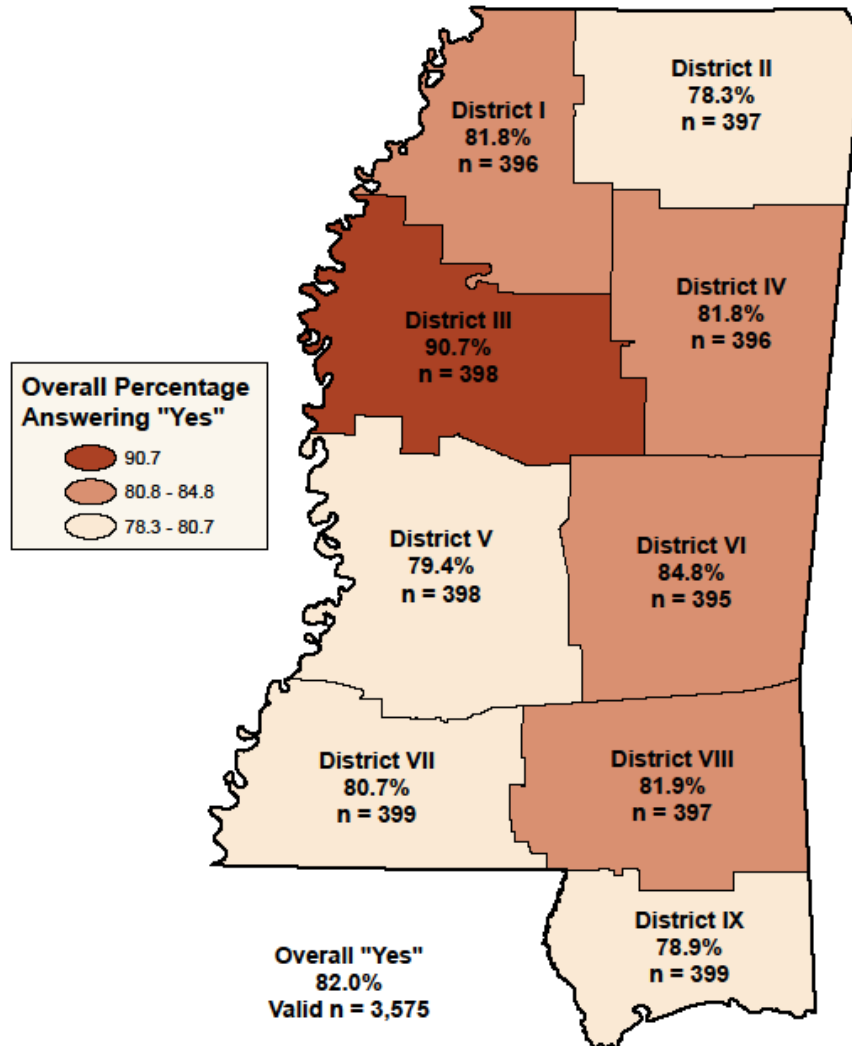
Percentage of Parents Who Support Students Learning How to Correctly Use a Condom  
2011

# Variation by Public Health District

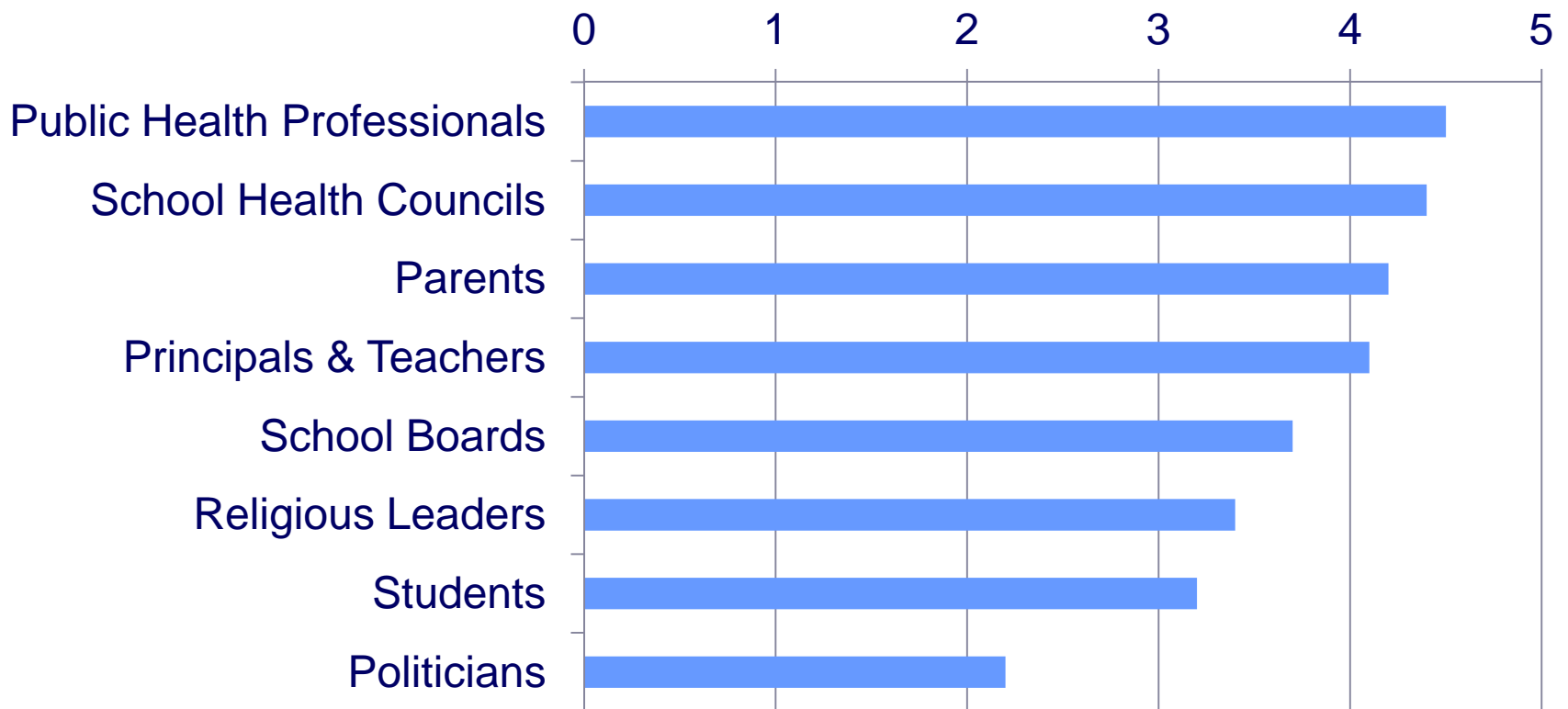


Percentage of Parents Who Support Teaching  
Where to Obtain Birth Control Products  
2011

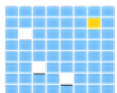
# Variation by Public Health District



On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being LEAST important and 5 being MOST important, who do you think should determine the material to be taught in sex-related education class?

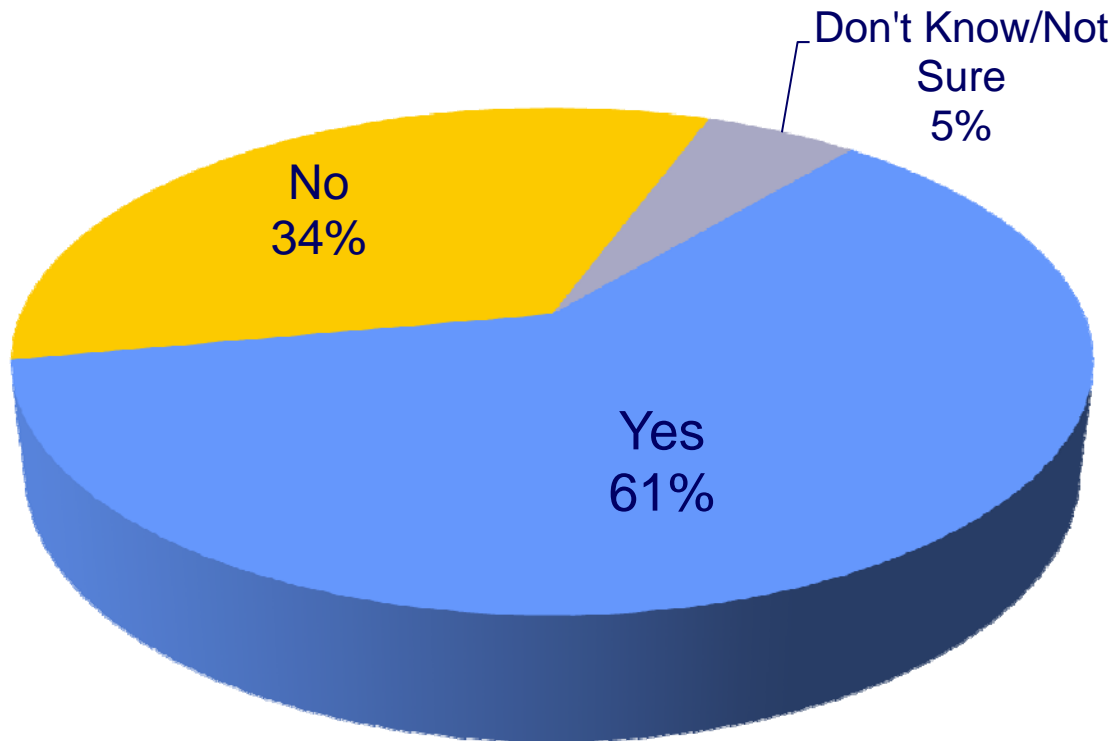


Least important → Most important



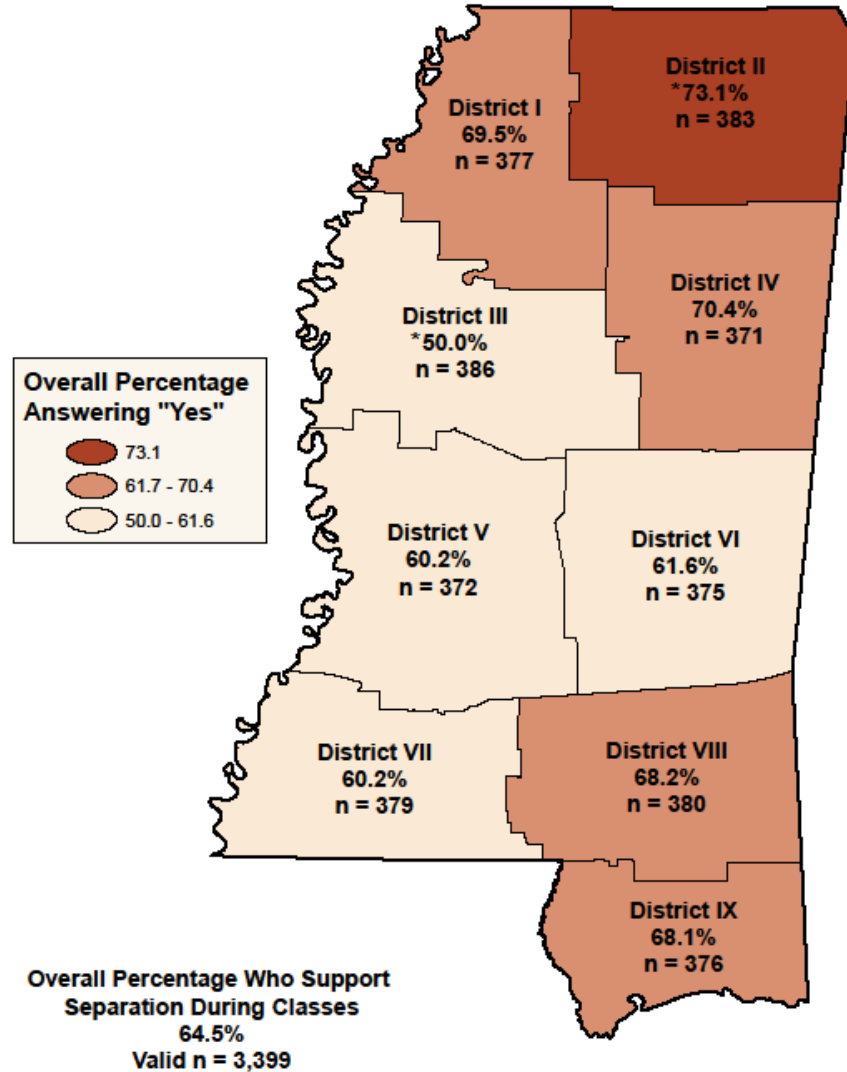
# Do you support students being separated by gender during sex-related education classes?

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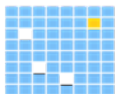
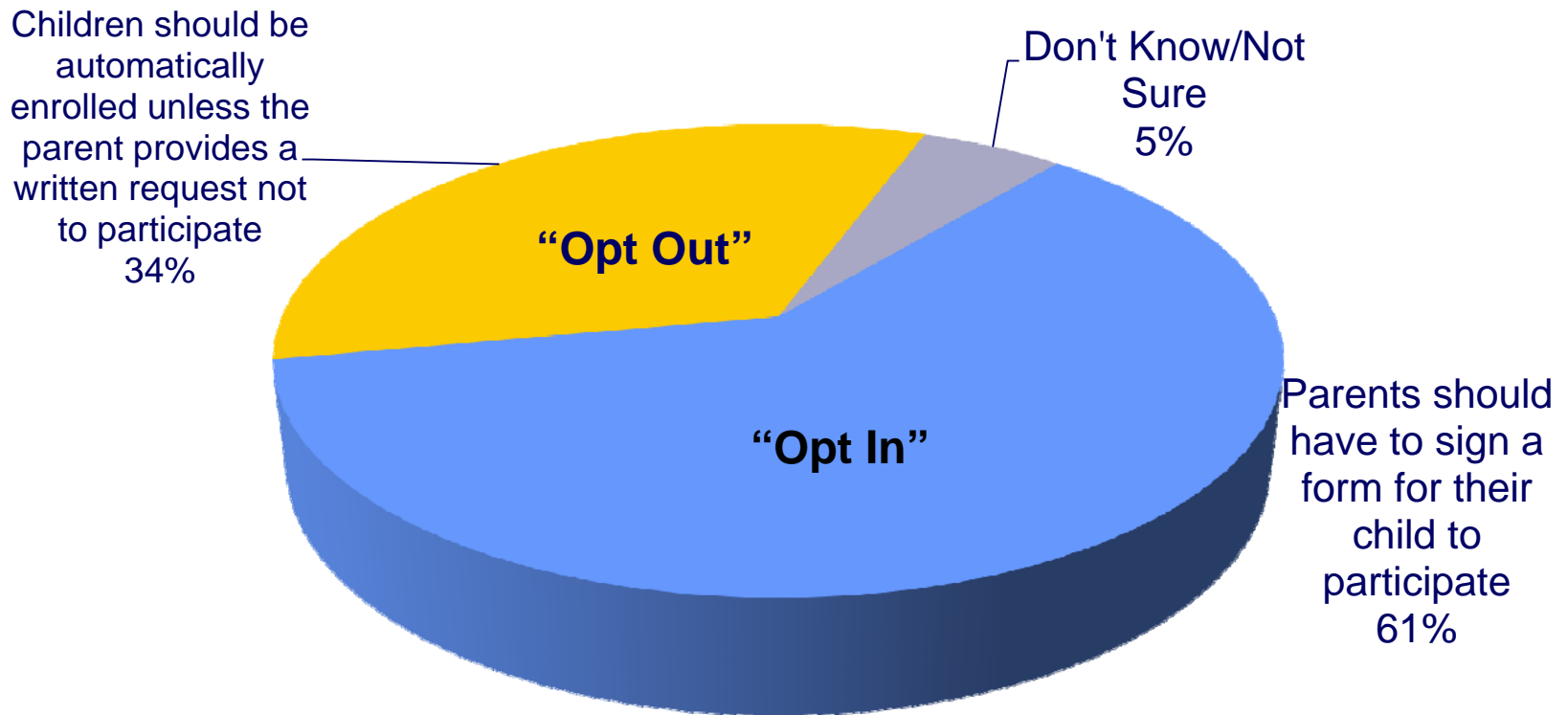
Percentage of Parents Who Support Students Being Separated During Sex-related Education Classes  
2011

# Variation by Public Health District



\* Statistically Significant p < .001

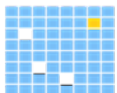
# In your opinion, how should student participation in sex-related education be determined?



# Key Findings



- Parents overwhelmingly support sex-related education being taught in public schools at an age-appropriate grade level.
- The majority of parents think sex-related education should begin in middle school.
- Parents support a comprehensive curriculum.
- Parents think public health professionals should have the most influence in determining the content of the curriculum.
- Parents support separating classes by gender and requiring parental permission for participation.

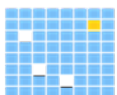


# Research Team



MISSISSIPPI STATE  
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# Full Report

Available on web site  
at [mshealthpolicy.com](http://mshealthpolicy.com)

**Parental Survey on Sex Education in Mississippi:  
Implications for House Bill 999**

**Final Report**

**November 4, 2011**

**Submitted and Funded by:**  
The Center for Mississippi Health Policy

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# Issue Brief

Available at the  
Summit and on-line at  
[mshealthpolicy.com](http://mshealthpolicy.com)

## What Do Mississippi Parents Think About Sex-Related Education in Public Schools?

December 2011

### ■ HB 999

During its 2011 Regular Session, the Mississippi Legislature passed HB 999, which requires each local school board to adopt a policy on sex-related education by June 30, 2012, to implement either an abstinence-only or an abstinence-plus curriculum. The Center for Mississippi Health Policy commissioned Mississippi State University's Social Science Research Center to survey parents of Mississippi public school students to assess their attitudes and opinions regarding the content of and methods for delivering sex-related education in the schools. This Issue Brief summarizes the results of the survey. A detailed report on survey findings can be found on the Center's web site at [www.mshealthpolicy.com](http://www.mshealthpolicy.com).

### ■ Significance

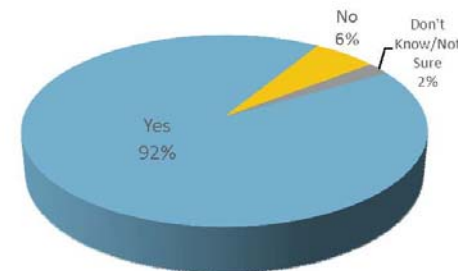
In addition to setting requirements regarding sex-related education in public schools, HB 999 also reconstitutes the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Task Force and revises its duties to include evaluation of the impact of sex-related education policies on teen pregnancy rates. Mississippi has the highest rate of births to teenagers of all states, and data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate high rates of sexual activity among Mississippi youth:

- 44.9 percent of high school students report currently being sexually active (highest of all reporting states);
- 61.0 percent of high school students report ever having sex (highest of all reporting states); and
- 26.2 percent of middle school students report ever having sex.

### ■ Public Perception

About 92 percent of parents surveyed said that sex-related education should be taught in the Mississippi public school system at an age-appropriate grade level.

Figure 1: Mississippi Parents' Responses to the Question: Should Sex-Related Education be Taught in the Mississippi Public School System at an Age Appropriate Grade Level?



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# Contact Information

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