



H. 662 an Act Relative to Instruction in Pregnancy and Pre- and Postnatal Care

- The curricula for sexuality and reproductive health education in Massachusetts schools appears in the “Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, October 1999” (hereafter “Frameworks”), published by the Massachusetts Department of Education.
- The Frameworks mentions study of the human life cycle, but scant attention is paid to the beginning of the human life cycle - the development and growth of the human baby in utero.
- H.662 cures this deficiency by mandating for 7th, 8th or 9th grade students, instruction in prenatal human development, according to accepted teachings of the National Institute of Health. It includes anatomical and physiological characteristics of an unborn child at 4-week intervals from fertilization to birth.
- Insufficient knowledge of prenatal development leads to poor prenatal care, bad nutrition, and pursuit of risky behaviors during pregnancy.ⁱ Complete instruction can help prevent complications during pregnancy, promote fetal health and development, reduce risks for the fetus, and ensure that drugs a pregnant teen may take, such as acne treatments, are safe.ⁱⁱ
- Massachusetts teens are getting pregnant. In 2017, there were 904 pregnancies of teens, aged 17 to younger than 15. Fifty of these were in the younger-than-15 age group. ⁱⁱⁱ
- A fair, fact-based appreciation of the humanity of the child in utero may help to deter teenage pregnancy in the commonwealth.
- In addition, H.662 mandates instruction on post-natal care. Educating teens on this topic will prepare them to meet the actual expectations and responsibilities of parenting and increase the likelihood of successful outcomes for mother, father, and infant.

i “What is prenatal care and why is it important?” Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NICHD, www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/pregnancy/conditioninfo/prenatal-care. Accessed 18 May 2021.

ii Id.

iii Maddow-Zimet I and Kost K, “Pregnancies, Births and Abortions in the United States, 1973-2017: National and State Trends by Age,” New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2021, www.guttmacher.org/report/pregnancies-birth-abortions-in-united-states-1973-2017.

Help MCFL Pass this Bill

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