



Trailhead Institute's
**YOUTH SEXUAL
HEALTH
PROGRAM**



Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE)

What: Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE) teaches about abstinence as the best method for avoiding STIs and unintended pregnancy, and teaches about condoms and contraception to reduce the risk of unintended pregnancy and of infection with STIs, including HIV. It also teaches interpersonal and communication skills and helps young people explore their own values, goals, and options. CSE is most effective when the content is age-appropriate.

Why: Decades of public

health research demonstrates that CSE programs help youth by¹:

- Delaying the onset of sexual activity
- Reducing the frequency sexual activity
 - Reducing sexual partners
 - Increasing use of condoms and contraceptives

1. Dilley, J. (2009). Research Review: School-Based Health Interventions and Academic Achievement. Healthy Students, Successful Students Partnership Committee, 9-12.



TRAILHEAD INSTITUTE'S YOUTH SEXUAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Trailhead Institute acts as a strategic resource for the public and environmental health community. Through our Youth Sexual Health program, we support organizations, collaboratives, communities and school districts in increasing access to comprehensive sexual health education for young people using an approach that is collaborative and community-driven. *We operate and implement programming based on the belief that every young person has the right to receive medically accurate information so they are empowered to make informed decisions about their own sexual health.*

Our Youth Sexual Programming

All youth sexual health programming at Trailhead Institute aligns with our three organizational drivers: Capacity, Collaboration & Justice

1

Capacity

We believe that community leaders are best suited to identify and address their own public health needs. It is essential to offer services that build their capacity to focus on solving community challenges, and improve the places where we live, work and play. The Working to Institutionalize Sexuality Education (WISE) initiative is community-driven every step of the way. Through WISE, Trailhead supports school districts and communities in adopting, implementing, and institutionalizing comprehensive sex education programs using an approach that emphasizes sustainability.

2

Collaboration

We believe that collaboration is the only way to address the problems we face because no one partner or industry can solve them alone. To this end, we host the Youth Sexual Health Alliance, a coalition created for youth serving professionals to coordinate efforts and build statewide partnerships.

3

Justice

We believe that for communities to thrive, there must be a recognition of the inequities that they face, and an awareness of our role in contributing to these systemic barriers. With this awareness, we must support the creation of just and equitable practices that allow communities to be at the forefront of decision-making and resource distribution. We engage in public health research-based projects, such as the State of Adolescent Sexual Health Report (SASH), with the aim of using data to highlight inequities and barriers that prevent young people from accessing sexual health education. This report provides a summary of up-to-date statistics on the sexual health of young people and a brief snapshot of how Colorado's progress compares to national trends over time. The data and recommendations inform programs and policies across the state that support the health and well-being of all Colorado youth.

A Deeper Dive: The Colorado WISE Initiative

What is WISE?

Working to Institutionalize Sex Education (WISE) started in 2009 as a nationwide effort dedicated to institutionalizing sex education so that sex education becomes part of a school district's core curricula, such as math, reading, and history. Colorado has been a part of WISE since its inception. WISE supports school districts by creating effective and sustainable rollout plans for the implementation of Comprehensive Sex Education (CSE).

The goals of WISE are to:

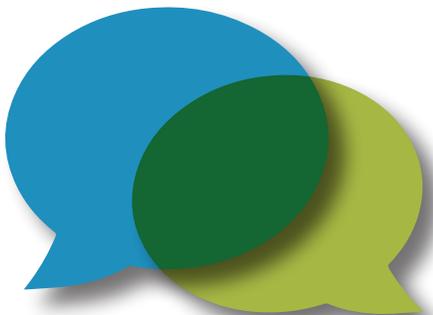
- Advance school-based sex education programs by supporting targeted implementation efforts
- Expand the professional body of knowledge related to best practices for institutionalizing sex education



What is the Colorado WISE approach to partnership?

The Colorado WISE approach to partnership places the needs and well-being of young people at the center, ensuring that they have all the practical and necessary tools to live healthy lives. Trailhead accomplishes this goal through engaging the community in a process of true collaboration, where people with diverse backgrounds and beliefs are invited to be a part of the decision making process. While individual values may vary, communities can come together around the shared value that all young people deserve information to make healthy, informed decisions.

We recognize that no two communities in our state are alike, so there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Trailhead goes into communities listening to what they need and how we can support them and their young people. Together, we create customized plans for effective implementation, which are also informed by lessons-learned and best practices gathered through our work with other local districts, community based organizations, state partners and national WISE Initiative partners in other states. This process can take years to implement, but ensures that schools have the time they need to include their community in the process and create a sustainable plan.



How do you get started?

The process usually begins with an initial conversation with our Youth Sexual Health Program Manager. This conversation evaluates the level of district readiness to partner. Once a level of readiness is established, the next step is to identify a primary contact who will move the process along in their community. Additionally, we help school district leaders identify other stakeholders and champions in the community who will support the process.



What is in it for your district & community?

Under the WISE Initiative, we increase the capacity of schools, districts, and teachers to select, implement, evaluate, and sustain, comprehensive sexual health education (CSE) programs and policies in schools. The benefit of being a partner is that WISE services and technical assistance are provided based on a school district's ability to pay. If the district has funds for sex education programming, a fee based on collaborative conversations with the school district will be determined.

How do I know if I am eligible to be a WISE partner?

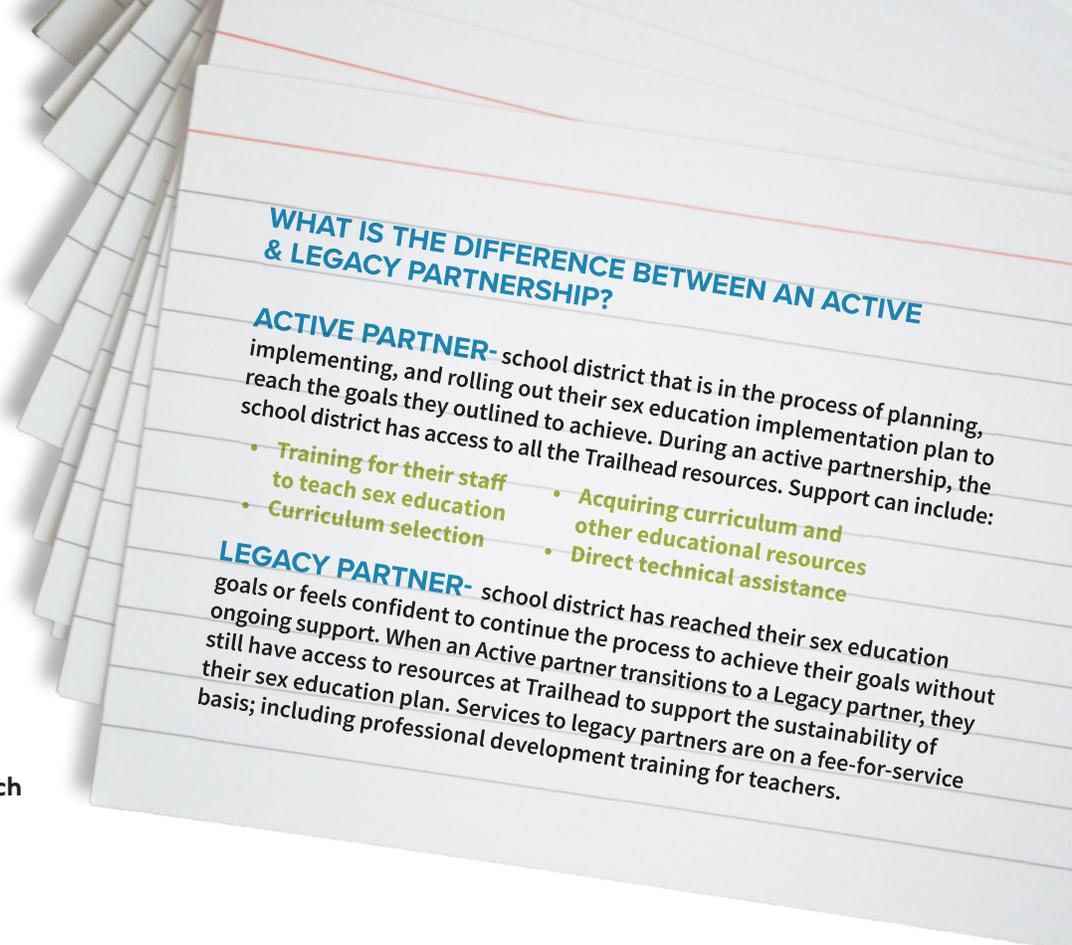
All Colorado public school districts are eligible to participate in the WISE initiative, as long as your school district is not a Legacy site (see next page for more on Legacy sites). In addition, we will consider partnership with community based organizations or public health departments depending on the capacity and readiness of local school districts to implement this programming.

Capacity building strategies & activities can include:

- Guide schools and districts through an assessment of available resources and creation of attainable longer-term implementation plans
- Assist in developing a customized district strategy for adopting policy and practices that support comprehensive sex education and lead to implementation of quality programs
- Develop and build upon district-community partnerships and networks to foster support for sex education programming
- Provide education and training for county, district and school staff on best approaches to teaching comprehensive sex education, program alignment with state sexual health education laws and educational standards, and elements of effective sex education programs
- Procurement and selection of comprehensive sexual health curriculum and other necessary educational materials for classroom implementation

What is the WISE Method?

The WISE method is a flexible approach to implementing sexuality education that is based on years of best practice research. Using this method, Trailhead works with active WISE sites to select and implement the best curriculum for that school and the students they serve. **The WISE approach includes four major steps:**



1. Scan

We translate the Colorado Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Law and the Colorado Department of Education Comprehensive Health Standards and help outline what these laws and requirements look like in classroom implementation. We can also review local school board health education policies, and support revising policies or implementing new policies.



2. Engage

Trailhead starts with the most motivated groups and individuals who want to use the WISE method, and we also know that sustainable change in education happens at the local district level. We commonly engage new school districts through partnerships we have cultivated with various organizations that include, *Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment, universities, and legacy/active WISE school districts.*

Once introductions are made, we have preliminary conversations with school districts about assistance, funding, and how we can support the community by improving or starting a sex education program.

We also identify stakeholders who are champions of their schools and communities, who are committed to making this work happen. These champions can be district level professionals, a health advisory committee (if one is already active) and parents, youth or community members. Once identified, these key stakeholders are engaged throughout the process often through participation in Health Advisory Boards that guide decision-making related to program selection, implementation and evaluation.

4-6

new school districts per school year use the WISE method

Length of each partnership varies based on the districts specific needs.



3. Design

Once a district becomes active, we start the process of designing a rollout and implementation plan. Every plan looks different for each district, and it is informed and based on what the community stakeholders identify as the core needs for their young people.



4. Implement

This stage puts all the planning into action. Depending on the needs of each WISE site, Trailhead supports the execution of a plan that may include curriculum training and developing staff competencies through identified supplemental training. During this stage, we also support schools in creating an evaluation and sustainability plan, which helps support the continuation of programming after our partnership ends.

Does Trailhead Institute offer trainings & technical assistance to organizations and districts who are not part of the WISE Initiative?

Yes, Trailhead Institute offers a variety of youth sexual health trainings and technical assistance services to school districts and organizations that are not part of the WISE Initiative. These trainings are offered on a fee-for-service basis.

Trailhead is also spearheading a state resource of trainers who can serve as experts on a variety of related topics and curricula.



**For more info
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About Trailhead Institute

Our Vision

Everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and live in a healthy environment

Our Mission

Trailhead Institute advances innovation and collaboration in public and environmental health

Trailhead Institute is an organization designed to be a strategic resource for in the public and environmental health community. While we aren't the boots-on-the-ground people executing programs, we support those who are. We support individuals, collaboratives and organizations addressing community challenges. Founded in 1993, we provide fiscal, operation and sustainability support to help a variety of projects make an impact on public and environmental health.

We have three main drivers of our work:

- 1 We believe that collaboration is the only way to address the public health problems we face because no one partner or industry can solve them alone.
- 2 We believe that it is essential to offer a space for community leaders to focus on delivering their mission to address community health challenges, and improve the places we live, work and play.
- 3 We believe that for communities to thrive, there must be a recognition of the inequities that they face, and an awareness of our role in contributing to these systemic barriers. With this awareness, we believe that we must support the creation of equitable practices that allow communities to be at the forefront of decision-making and resource distribution.

Start of Trailhead

1993

Colorado Foundation for Public Health and the Environment is founded to meet a need for fiscal management of funds coming from the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment and out into communities.

1998

The Regional Institute for Health and Environmental Leadership (RIHEL) is created with our flagship Advanced Leadership Training Program.

2008

CFPHE hires its first professional staff. Our Community Engagement Program starts in partnership with the Colorado Clinical and Translational Science Institute with the University of Colorado.

2015

We continue to grow our work and staff, expanding both our Fiscal Sponsorship and Community Engagement programs.

2013

We expand our Community Engagement program while working with the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute. Our staff increases to 10 employees.

2016

CFPHE embarks on rebranding and renaming effort.

2017

CFPHE launches its new identity as Trailhead Institute.

2018

Youth Sexual Health Program started

