



Working with Youth in

**OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT OR
EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

A Toolkit by

 **maine family planning** &  **New Beginnings**







Contact Information



**Book an Appointment:
(207) 922-3222**

More information at mainefamilyplanning.org

 **MaineFamilyPlanning**

 **@FPAMaine**



**24-Hour Help:
(207) 795-4070**

More information at newbeginmaine.org

 **NewBeginningsInc**



Introduction & Table of Contents

The Maine Youth in Care Bill of Rights states that young people in foster, adoptive, and kinship care have the right to learn about their sexuality in a safe and supportive environment. This toolkit is designed to help make that right a reality.

Inside, you will find helpful tips and conversation starters, clear definitions, and further resources to help you support youth as they navigate a variety of scenarios. From birth control and pregnancy prevention to gender identity and sexual orientation, these pages will help you answer tough questions with knowledge and compassion.

Maine Family Planning and New Beginnings are committed to ensuring every young person in Maine has access to comprehensive sexuality information and services, no matter where or under what circumstances they live. Using this toolkit, we can empower under-served young people to make healthy decisions and build the lives and futures they envision.

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Rights of Maine Youth Related to Accessing Health Services

When it comes to sexual health, youth deserve open, honest information and support.

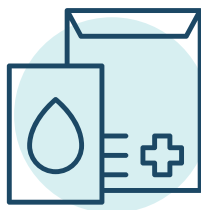
Maine youth have the right to information and medical care related to sexual health without requiring a parent/guardian's consent or notification. These Maine laws help to ensure that young people are able to access care and make informed decisions about their sexual health and overall well-being.

By sharing the information in this toolkit, you can help youth achieve these rights and promote healthy decision-making.

As an adult supporting youth, you play an important role in helping young people stay healthy and informed.

In Maine, youth in state care or custody, as well as youth experiencing homelessness:

- » Shall be allowed to discover and express their gender and sexual identity regardless of placement, and shall not be subjected to discrimination or fear for their safety because of their gender or sexual identity. (1.4)*
- » Shall be educated on the components of healthy romantic relationships through a supportive adult. (1.6)*
- » Has the right to learn about their sexuality in a safe and supportive environment. (1.7)*
- » Shall receive health care and services that are fair, respectful, safe, confidential, and free from discrimination. (6.6)*





Keep in Mind



- » Many adults find it difficult to talk with a young person about sexual health. This could be due to personal or religious beliefs, lack of information or comfort, or not having established a trusted relationship with the young person.
- » If you are not able to have a conversation with a young person about accessing sexual health services, help facilitate or encourage them to talk with an adult they trust.
- » Consider connecting with a Youth Transition Specialist, case manager, or other support, and ask them to be part of team meetings.
- » Many young people aren't comfortable accessing needed health services. Youth may also have had negative experiences with the health care system.
- » Be aware of Maine laws and agency procedures on mandated reporting to keep youth safe from exploitation.
- » You may not have all the answers, but you can help a young person find the answers, point them in the right direction, and connect them to information and services.

Messages for Youth



- » You have rights as a minor in Maine to access sexual health information and services without needing permission or consent from an adult.
- » These services include birth control and pregnancy testing; pregnancy options counseling; abortion care; and testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections.
- » Sexual health services are confidential—meaning they are private. It is up to you to decide if you want to share this information with others.
- » I am here to support you, and I am also here to keep you safe. If you are in a situation where you may be harmed, or cause harm to yourself or others, I will need to involve other people.
- » If you do not have another trusted adult in your life, I am here to support you.

Conversation Starters

- » *Who do you rely on when you need help?*
- » *Do you have a trusted adult in your life you could talk to about your sexual health?*
- » *Do you know where your local resources are for sexual health?*
- » *Do you feel comfortable talking to your health care provider about your sexual health?*
- » *Are there ways I can help you access health services?*
- » *Do you need a ride to the doctor or help making an appointment?*

RESOURCES

Maine Family Planning offers a range of affordable sexual health services.

You can also visit **mainefamilyplanning.org** or call **(207) 922-3222** for more information about services, to find clinic locations, make an appointment online, or chat with a family planning professional.

Information about other organizations that serve and support Maine youth can be found throughout this toolkit.



Youth Experiencing Homelessness

All young people deserve a safe and stable place to stay, and to have their physical, social, and emotional needs met while they pursue their goals. Despite this, the reality for many young people is that they experience homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives, sometimes at multiple points. Providers working with youth experiencing homelessness have an incredible opportunity to act as a safe, stable, consistent, and trusted adult, which many young people experiencing homelessness lack. There is no one way a youth experiencing homelessness may present—youth may be “staying with friends,” sleeping in a car, walking all night and “resting” during the day at drop-in spaces, etc.

Keep in Mind



- » **1 in 10** 18-25 year-olds experience some form of homelessness in a year**
- » **1 in 30** 13-17 year-olds experience some form of homelessness in a year**
- » About half of the youth experiencing homelessness in a year are experiencing homelessness for the first time**
- » **40%** of youth experiencing homelessness report a sexuality other than heterosexual*
- » **85%** of youth experiencing homelessness report having Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)*
- » **40%** of youth experiencing homelessness attend school regularly*
- » Youth experiencing homelessness are three times as likely as housed peers to have attempted suicide in the past year*
- » Nearly **1 in 5** youth experiencing homelessness report being hurt by an intimate partner in the last year*

NOTE: When a young person is experiencing homelessness, this is only one part of their life, and while it is often a significant event, it is not who they are. Remember to talk with young people experiencing homelessness about other aspects of their lives as well—youth experiencing homelessness still have whole lives including hobbies and aspirations!

*According to the 2017 Maine Homeless Youth Risk Behavior Survey (MHYRBS)

**According to the 2017 Chapin Hall Voices of Youth Count



Messages for Youth

- » There are many services you can access without agreeing to stay in a shelter or transitional living program.
- » Shelter and transitional living programs are not locked facilities; you are free to leave if you choose.
- » Staff of youth homelessness service providers are mandated reporters. However, they also work to involve youth in decision making and other processes that affect care and services.
- » You are the expert in your experiences, so what you have to say is valuable.
- » Under the McKinney-Vento Act, youth experiencing homelessness have the right to continue to attend their school—including to receive transportation—or enroll at another local school, even if you are missing documentation or typical enrollment deadlines have passed.

NOTE:

Find more information on the McKinney-Vento Act at: maine.gov/doe/schools/safeschools/counseling/highmobility/homelessed

Conversation Starters

- » *Where have you stayed in the past?*
- » *Have you eaten or are you hungry?*
- » *Do you need any hygiene supplies?*
- » *Are there safe people you can contact if you need help?*
- » *What is the most important thing to you right now that you want or need help with?*



RESOURCES

Youth Shelter Providers in Maine

New Beginnings, Inc.
Lewiston, ME
(207) 795-4070 (24/7)
newbeginmaine.org

Preble Street Teen Services
Portland, ME
(207) 775-0026
preblestreet.org

Shaw House
Bangor, ME
(866) 561-SHAW
theshawhouse.org

National Resources

National Network for Youth
nn4youth.org

Voices of Youth Count
voicesofyouthcount.org

National Runaway Safeline
1800runaway.org

Schoolhouse Connection
schoolhouseconnection.org



Gender Identity & Sexual Orientation

LGBTQIA+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, intersex, and asexual. The plus sign includes all the other terms people use to identify their gender or sexual orientation. The vocabulary for the many ways people identify their sexual orientation and gender is expansive and keeps evolving. How someone identifies is up to the individual and should be respected.

As an adult supporting youth, you can play an important role in affirming and supporting LGBTQIA+ youth.

Keep in Mind



- » Youth who experience homelessness or are in state care are more likely to identify as LGBTQIA+ than their peers who are not. This can be for many reasons, including lack of family acceptance.
- » Trauma does not cause someone to identify as LGBTQIA+. Youth who identify as LGBTQIA+ are at higher risk of abuse, neglect, homelessness, and trafficking.
- » Many teens are not comfortable sharing their gender identity or sexual orientation, or may still be exploring those aspects of their identity.
- » Do not make assumptions about a young person's sexual orientation or identity.
- » Don't surprise a young person by asking them about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Consider your motivation for asking: *What is the importance of knowing? Why do I need this information?*
- » Always use gender inclusive language, such as "partner."
- » Be aware that there is a growing list of terminology around gender and orientation; honor someone's name or pronoun, even if it changes frequently.



Messages for Youth

- » People may identify their gender and sexual orientation in many ways. All are okay.
- » Someone's gender identity or sexual orientation is part of who someone is, and not something someone chooses. People **can** choose how they express or present themselves to others.
- » It is not okay for someone to be treated unfairly, harassed, or bullied because of their gender identity or sexual orientation.
- » There are resources in Maine where people who identify as LGBTQIA+ can be supported.
- » A person has a right to decide when, how, and with whom they want to share their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Conversation Tips

Rather than starting a conversation with a young person about their gender or orientation, let a young person take the lead. Sharing information about their identity or orientation should be on their terms.

Ask all youth which name and pronouns they use. You can offer information about your personal pronouns. ***"Hi, I'm Sarah, my pronouns are she/her/hers. Would you like to share your pronouns?"***

They/Them/Theirs is a gender neutral way of referring to someone without making assumptions about the pronouns they use.

Notes on Coming Out

- » Coming out is a process when someone shares their identity willingly with others.
- » It can be difficult each time a young person comes out to others about their gender identity or sexual orientation—particularly when they do not know who will be open and accepting.
- » It is not our place or right to "out" young people to others.
- » While coming out may be a relief to the young person, each time they share this information they are taking a risk of not being accepted or potentially harmed.
- » Documenting a young person's gender identity or sexual orientation may "out" them before they are ready and may be unsafe.

If someone comes out to you:

- » Thank them and let them know they are brave for doing so.
- » Let them know that you accept and support them.
- » Find out if they want other people to know.
- » Remember that their gender/sexuality is just one part of who they are.
- » Ask how you can best support them.

RESOURCES

Organizations in Maine that support LGBTQIA+ youth

OUT Maine
outmaine.org

Maine Trans Net
mainetransnet.org

Health Equity Alliance
mainehealthequity.org

Portland Outright
portlandoutright.org

Outright/Lewiston-Auburn
outrightla.org

Resources for LGBTQIA+ terminology

The Safe Zone Project
thesafezoneproject.com/resources/vocabulary/

UC Davis
lgbtqia.ucdavis.edu/educated/glossary



Healthy Relationships

Relationships play an important role in a person's sexual health.

One in three adolescents in the U.S. is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional, or verbal abuse from a dating partner, a figure that far exceeds rates of other types of youth violence (loveisrespect.org).

As an adult supporting youth, you can play an important role in helping a young person identify the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships and supporting them in their ability to navigate friendships and intimate relationships.

Keep in Mind



- » The ability for a young person to form healthy relationships is influenced by family, past trauma, media exposure, and personal relationships.
- » Many young people lack the comfort and experience to set and discuss boundaries in their relationships.
- » Youth may also lack effective communication skills and rely on social media and texting. You can help a young person by discussing effective ways to communicate with a friend or partner.
- » There are many reasons why it is difficult to recognize abuse or leave abusive relationships. Do not judge. Help a young person identify aspects of their relationship that may be harmful and brainstorm resources for addressing them.
- » Youth report that it can be difficult for them to identify healthy and unhealthy qualities in their relationships. They want adults to tell them when they see relationship qualities that are harmful. Even if the young person doesn't see it, or resists it at first, it's important for adults to say something.
- » Explore with youth ways they can identify or give consent in their relationships.
- » Help youth understand the impact of alcohol and drug use in communicating with a partner and being able to give and recognize consent in sexual situations.
- » Youth, and especially those facing or experiencing homelessness, may stay in unhealthy relationships because they meet an immediate need, such as access to food or shelter.



Messages for Youth

- » Healthy relationships are built on equality and respect and can take a lifetime to develop.
- » It's important to identify a trusted adult to help you in difficult relationship situations.
- » Arguing or disagreeing with a partner is normal. Using put-downs, controlling language, or physical aggression with a partner is unhealthy.
- » Walking away from a fight and telling your partner you need space to clear your mind is a healthy way to deal with conflict.
- » Just because you may have experienced relationships that did not serve your needs, does not mean you deserve to feel that way.
- » It is everyone's responsibility in a relationship to make sure that there is consent.
- » It is your decision to be or not to be sexually active. This is true regardless of your past sexual experiences.
- » You should not feel pressured or pressure someone else to have sex.

Conversation Starters

- » *Do you feel safe in your relationship?*
- » *Do you feel your relationship is equal and you treat each other with respect?*
- » *Do you have someone you can talk to when you are having relationship problems?*
- » *What are healthy ways you can manage and resolve conflict in a relationship?*
- » *How do you know if your partner is consenting to sexual activity?*
- » *What can you do if you change your mind about having sex with someone?*
- » *Is there something I can do to help?*



RESOURCES

The Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence (MCEDV)

provides info on domestic violence service providing throughout Maine.

1-866-834-HELP
mcedv.org

Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault

provides a list of sexual assault support centers around the state, a sexual assault helpline, and a chat feature on their website.

(800) 871-7741
mecasa.org

Loveisrespect.org

provides resources for an individual to assess their own relationship, as well as tips for a friend, parent, or trusted adult to discuss healthy relationships with youth. Information is available on how childhood trauma can have an impact on relationships.

Love is Respect offers a helpline through chat, phone, and by texting.

Text: LOVEIS to
(866) 331-9474
Call: (866) 331-9474
loveisrespect.org



Pregnancy & Parenting

Youth have the right to make their own reproductive decisions, including if and when to become a parent.

As an adult supporting youth, you can play an important role in helping a young person determine their reproductive life plan, including preventing, spacing, or planning for a healthy pregnancy.

Teen pregnancy and birth rates have continued to decline nationally, and in Maine, due to increased access to information and services. At the same time, there are disparities in youth populations where teen pregnancy rates are still high. Youth in foster care are twice as likely as their peers to have a child by the age of 19. According to the May 2018 publication, *“Missed Opportunity: Pregnant & Parenting Youth Experiences of Homelessness in the US,”* approximately 1.1 million children had a young parent who experienced homelessness in the past years.

Keep in Mind



- » Support all young people equally, regardless of their identified gender or sexual orientation, in conversations about sexual and reproductive health, pregnancy, and parenting. This will establish a sense of equal responsibility and accountability.
- » Pregnant youth should be aware of all of their pregnancy options, including abortion, adoption, and parenting.
- » If you do not feel comfortable or knowledgeable about discussing all pregnancy options and resources, identify someone to continue this discussion with a pregnant youth.
- » If a young person becomes pregnant, keep your reaction neutral. Avoid using language that shows either disappointment or congratulations.
- » Respect a young person’s responsibility in making a pregnancy decision that is best for them. Provide support regardless of their decision.
- » Regardless of how we might feel about teen pregnancy, when properly supported, many youth are capable of parenting.
- » Many youth who become pregnant may worry about losing custody. Address the potential challenges and supports they need in becoming a parent.

NOTE: Most services for pregnant teens, including pregnancy testing, abortion related services, and prenatal and delivery care, are covered by MaineCare.



Messages for Youth

- » If you are pregnant, you have the right to decide the outcome of your pregnancy—whether that decision is abortion, adoption, or becoming a parent.
- » Both partners in a relationship have equal responsibility for preventing unplanned pregnancy, as well as the responsibilities of becoming a parent.
- » Becoming a parent can be challenging. There are resources available to help you.

Conversation Starters

- » *Have you thought about your options with the pregnancy?*
- » *Do you have a trusted adult you can talk to about your options?*
- » *How can I help you find answers to your questions so you can make the best decision for yourself?*
- » *Do you know where you could go for prenatal care?*
- » *Do you need help getting to or making a doctor's appointment?*

NOTE: Crisis Pregnancy Centers do not support pregnant youth who may be considering abortion. **These Centers are not licensed medical providers and do not provide unbiased, accurate information for pregnant youth considering their full range of pregnancy options.**



RESOURCES

Unbiased Pregnancy Options Counseling

pregnancyoptions.info
mainefamilyplanning.org
mabelwadsworth.org
plannedparenthood.org

Abortion Services

Minors in Maine have the right to access abortion services without requiring parent/guardian permission.

Maine Family Planning

(207) 922-3222
mainefamilyplanning.org

Mabel Wadsworth

(207) 947-5337
(800) 948-5337
mabelwadsworth.org

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England

(866) 476-1321
plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-northern-new-england

Adoption Services

Adoption Partners of Maine

(844) 300-LOVE (5683)
adoptionpartnersofmaine.org

Programs Supporting Teen Parents

Good Samaritan

goodsamaritanbangor.org

Maine Children's Home

mainechildrenshome.org

Maine Families

mainefamilies.org



Birth Control & Pregnancy Prevention

Youth have the right to make their own sexual and reproductive health decisions. This includes deciding whether and when to have sex and accessing confidential sexual and reproductive health services.

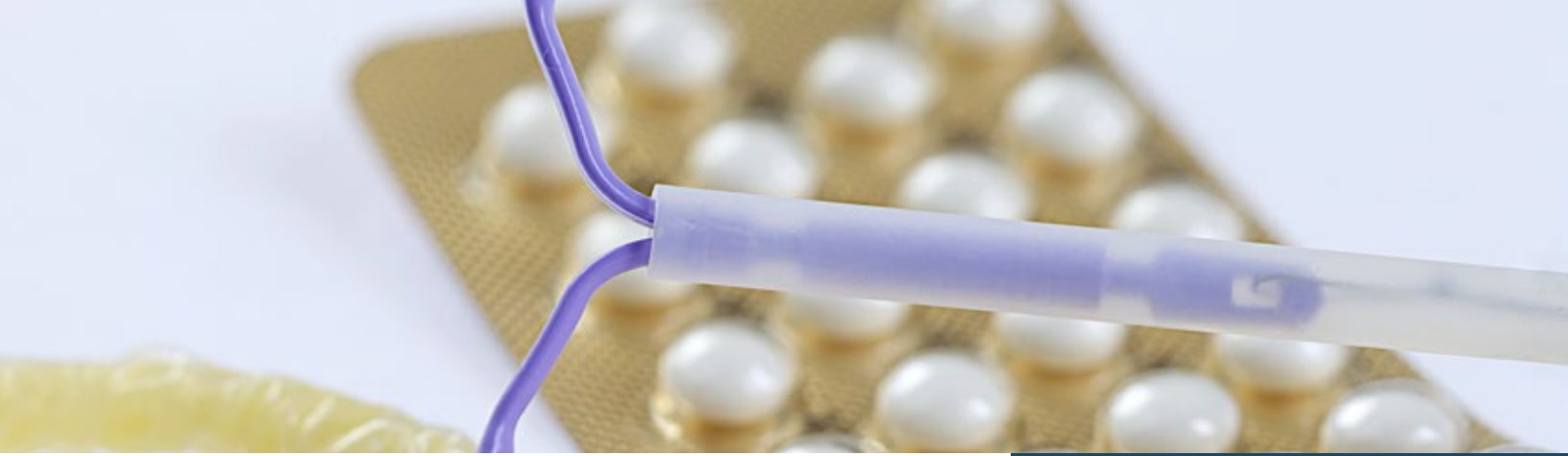
As an adult supporting youth, you can play an important role in ensuring that young people are aware of their rights and have the information and ability to access birth control and reproductive health services.

Keep in Mind



- » Birth control options change over time. What is right for one person may not be right for someone else. It is important that a teen is able to discuss with a qualified health professional what method might work best for them.
- » In most cases, adolescents are not required to have a physical exam before they start a method of birth control, which is important for people who have experienced trauma or past sexual abuse.
- » Some methods of birth control, like an implant or IUD, are less visible and require fewer visits to a health care provider. This can be beneficial for youth who may experience frequent changes in their living situations.
- » People in abusive or unequal relationships are not as likely to advocate for birth control use. Some partners may also tamper with their birth control methods, resulting in higher rates of unintended pregnancy.
- » Communities of color and other minority groups experience medical mistrust resulting from historical injustices that are still present today. Be mindful of this when discussing birth control and healthcare options with youth who may seem resistant.

NOTE: Most sexual health exams, birth control methods, and pregnancy prevention services are covered by MaineCare and are offered on a sliding fee scale. Many sexual health services are also available through virtual telehealth visits.

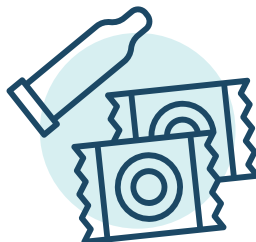
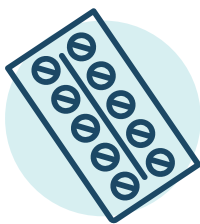
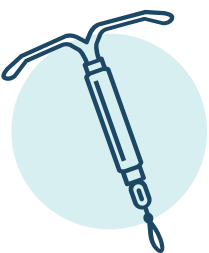


Messages for Youth

- » If you are interested in pregnancy prevention, there are many methods to choose from: hormonal, barrier, and behavioral. Some methods are long-acting and do not require repeat visits to a clinic.
- » Hormonal birth control methods do not protect against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- » Protect yourself and your partner by using birth control and barrier methods to prevent **both** pregnancy and STIs at the same time.
- » Health insurance plans, including MaineCare, cover most birth control options.
- » Family planning clinics offer services on a sliding fee scale for people who do not have insurance, or who do not want to use their insurance to protect their privacy.
- » **Emergency contraception (EC)** can prevent pregnancy up to 5 days after unprotected sex and works in the same way as birth control pills by preventing a pregnancy. EC is not the same as the abortion pill.

Conversation Starters

- » *Do you know how someone can become pregnant or cause a pregnancy?*
- » *Do you have information about the ways someone can prevent pregnancy?*
- » *Are you able to talk to your partner about pregnancy prevention?*
- » *Have you thought about if or when you want to be a parent?*
- » *Have you thought about what you would do if you became pregnant (got someone pregnant)?*
- » *Can I help you find a trusted health care provider you can talk to about birth control options?*



RESOURCES

Maine Family Planning
(207) 922-3222
mainefamilyplanning.org

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England
(866) 476-1321
plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-northern-new-england

Bedsider
Bedsider.org

Emergency Contraception (EC)

Emergency contraception (EC) can be used up to 120 hours after unprotected sex to prevent pregnancy. For example; if a condom breaks, no birth control was used, and in cases of sexual assault. EC is not the abortion pill and will not harm an existing pregnancy.

Youth of any age or gender can buy emergency contraception at a pharmacy without a prescription. There are different types of EC that are available at family planning clinics at a lower cost. More information about EC can be found at:
ec.princeton.edu



Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are common, and the rates of STIs like chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis are increasing. In the U.S., half of all new STI cases are in people under 25 years old.

As an adult supporting youth, you can play an important role in helping youth understand their risk and identifying ways to get tested.

Keep in Mind



- » Many teens and young adults are unaware of the behaviors that can put them at risk for STIs.
- » If you are working with a youth who has an STI, it is important to destigmatize diagnosis and treatment and encourage partner communication. Avoid using shaming language, and acknowledge that many people will contract an STI during their lifetime.
- » A history of trauma can impede decision-making and increase feelings of shame around a positive STI diagnosis.
- » STIs do not discriminate. Many people from all walks of life experience or live with STIs.
- » The sooner an STI is identified and treated, the better the health outcome.
- » Testing is readily available and easy, but most health care providers do not automatically test for STIs.
- » People in abusive or unequal relationships are not as likely to advocate for condom use and have higher rates of STIs.

NOTE: Most services for testing and treatment of sexually transmitted infections are covered by MaineCare or are offered on a sliding fee scale.



Preventing Sexually Transmitted Infections

- » Not having sex or sharing needles is the most effective way to prevent STIs.
- » Barrier methods (like condoms) are very effective in preventing the spread of HIV and most STIs.
- » There is no age restriction on purchasing condoms and other barrier methods, and they are also available for **free** at family planning clinics throughout Maine.
- » There are condoms that are internal and external (AKA male and female condoms) that can be used for oral, anal, and vaginal sex.
- » Both condoms and oral dams can be used to prevent STIs during oral sex.

Messages for Youth

- » Many people get STIs; it is not something that someone should be embarrassed or ashamed about.
- » STIs can be passed on through vaginal, oral, and anal sex.
- » There are STIs that can be cured; other STIs, like HIV, cannot be cured, but there are medications to manage symptoms.
- » Most testing for STIs involves a urine or finger stick blood test, and can be done easily at a doctor's office or family planning clinic.
- » Sexually active young people should be tested for STIs at least once a year, more often if there is a change of partners or if someone is worried that they have been exposed to an STI.
- » If you test positive for an STI, there are confidential ways to let your partner(s) know without giving them your name.

Conversation Starters

- » *Do you have information about how to protect yourself from sexually transmitted infections? How can I help?*
- » *Being diagnosed with an STI is common; there is no reason to feel ashamed.*
- » *It is important for both partners to get tested for STIs.*
- » *If your partner gets angry or says they don't trust you when you say you want to get tested or use condoms, it could be a sign of an unhealthy relationship.*

NOTE: PrEP (Pre-exposure prophylaxis, also known as Truvada®) is a medication that is very effective at preventing HIV for someone who engages in unprotected sex, shares IV drugs, or is having sex with someone who is HIV positive.

RESOURCES

Get Yourself Tested

cdc.gov/std/sam/gyt/knowthefacts.htm

American Sexual Health Association

[iwannaknow.org](https://www.iwannaknow.org)

In addition to your doctor's office, these sites in Maine offer STI testing

Maine Family Planning

(207) 922-3222
mainefamilyplanning.org

Planned Parenthood of Northern New England

(866) 476-1321
plannedparenthood.org/northern-new-england

Sites that offer confidential and anonymous HIV testing and case management for people living with HIV

Frannie Peabody, Portland

(207) 749-6818
peabodycenter.org

Health Equity Alliance (HEAL)

mainehealthequity.org

St. Mary's Regional Medical Center

(207) 777-8100

MaineGeneral Horizon Program

(207) 621-3785



Sexual Abuse & Assault

While sexual violence is sometimes connected to interpersonal violence that occurs in the context of a relationship, we acknowledge that this is not always the case. This is particularly true for young people experiencing other vulnerabilities such as homelessness. For this reason, it is important to respond to disclosures of sexual violence in whichever context may be most appropriate for each individual circumstance. Additionally, be upfront with minors including those above the age of consent that discussing instances of sexual violence may require you to take action as a mandated reporter.

Keep in Mind



- » For the purposes of this guide, sexual abuse refers to sexual violence as experienced by minors, while sexual assault refers to sexual violence as experienced by those 18 and older.
- » There is no national age of consent or legal definition for consent, sexual abuse, or sexual assault; these can vary widely from state-to-state.
- » The age of consent for sexual activity in Maine is 16, however there are special provisions for those who are 14 and 15.
- » Encourage young people to not focus on the outcome of any potential law enforcement investigation, but rather their own sense of body autonomy and boundaries when processing instances of sexual violence.
- » Avoid questions or providing commentary that question a Survivor's role in an act of sexual violence or that otherwise places blame onto them. Instead, affirm that they are now in a safe space to seek support.

NOTE: It is your role to support a young person who may share that they have experienced sexual abuse or assault. While you may provide referrals to other providers (medical, legal, mental health, advocacy, etc.), it is not your job to investigate or otherwise intervene in these matters. Doing so may cause further trauma or impede any potential civil or criminal investigations.



Messages for Youth

- » Sexual violence is never a Survivor's fault; you did not deserve to experience something like this.
- » Sexual violence can take many forms, and does not need to cause physical injury to "count."
- » There is no "right" way to move forward from or heal from sexual violence, and you are doing great.
- » It is possible to have a healthy, positive, fulfilling sexual identity after experiencing sexual violence.
- » Being aware of the intricacies of consent (such as age, awareness, etc.) can not only help keep you safer, but it can help you make decisions that won't cause harm to others.

Conversation Starters

- » *Thank you for sharing this with me.*
- » *How do you feel about the situation you are describing?*
- » *Would you like assistance accessing medical or legal help?*
- » *Is there someone else who you would like to have present to support you while we discuss this?*
- » *This isn't your fault, and you did not deserve to experience this.*



RESOURCES

Maine-Specific Resources

Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Services
(SAPARS, serving New Beginnings service area)
(800) 871-7741 (24/7)
sapars.org

Maine Network of Children's Advocacy Centers
cacmaine.org

Wabanaki Women's Coalition
wabanakiwomenscoalition.org

Immigrant Resource Center of Maine
ircofmaine.org

National Resources

National Sexual Violence Resource Center
nsvrc.org

The Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN)
(800) 656-HOPE (24/7)
rainn.org

1 in 6
1in6.org

No More Campaign
nomore.org



Human Trafficking & Exploitation

Human trafficking and exploitation can take many forms, most commonly in relation to labor or sexual activity. There are varying local, state, and federal definitions related to trafficking and exploitation, but one way providers can think about these scenarios is through the lens of inequitable treatment or a power imbalance that involves force, fraud, or coercion of the young person in order to meet needs including shelter, food, substances, or perceived safety of themselves or other important people in their lives.

Keep in Mind



- » Many Survivors don't label their experience as having been trafficked or exploited, this language can be off-putting, especially early in the process of becoming aware of what they have experienced or exiting the life.
- » Having conversations about relationships or interpersonal dynamics may be difficult for some Survivors, as these are not realms they may be comfortable or familiar discussing or asserting wants or needs.
- » Experiencing exploitative circumstances can feel normalized for Survivors; these circumstances may be viewed as a way to meet needs.
- » Exiting trafficking and exploitation situations can be confusing, and there may be aspects of the life Survivors miss or enjoyed.

Ways to Be Supportive of a Young Person Who Is or Has Experienced Trafficking or Exploitation

- » Being authentic and honest in interactions
- » Listening empathetically as opposed to sympathetically
- » Staying focused on empowerment as opposed to rescuing
- » Remaining consistent in word and deed
- » Remember that in the case of minors, this includes being transparent and upfront about your duties as a mandated reporter, as well as steps you may take to include the minor in any reports which may need to be made



Messages for Youth

- » Experiencing trafficking or exploitation is never your fault, you simply did what was necessary to survive in the moment.
- » Experiencing trafficking or exploitation is not a defining characteristic of who or what you were, are, or will be.
- » It takes incredible amounts of insight, bravery, and trust to talk about these experiences—thank you for sharing this.
- » You deserve to be and feel safe.
- » You did what you needed to do to survive and meet your needs. That is okay.

Conversation Starters

- » *Do you feel safe at work or where you stay?*
- » *Do you have access to important documents, like your ID or any other legal paperwork?*
- » *How do you get the things you need or want?*
- » *How are you paid for the work you do?*
- » *How do you pay, or what do you have to do, to stay where you stay?*



RESOURCES

General Information & Helplines

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Call: (888) 373-7888
Text: "BEFREE" 233733
humantraffickinghotline.org

Polaris Project

Call: (888) 373-7888
Text: "BEFREE" 233733
polarisproject.org

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children

(800) THE-LOST
missingkids.org

Resources in Maine for Survivors

Survivor Speak USA

survivorspeakusa.org

Courage Lives

couragelivesme.org

Safe Voices

safevoices.org

Sophia's House

wisdomswomen.org/sophias-house

Restoration Ink

facebook.com/restorationink

Resources for Providers

Maine Sex Trafficking and Exploitation Network

mainesten.org

The Freedom Network USA

freedomnetworkusa.org

Office for Victims of Crime

ovc.ncjrs.gov/humantrafficking



Marian's Place

491 Main Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 795-4070

- » 24-Hour Short-Term Shelter for Youth Ages 10–19
- » Family Mediation with or without Shelter Stay

Outreach Program

134 College Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 795-6831

- » Youth Drop-in Center for Ages 14–21 in Lewiston
- » Street Outreach and Case Management for Androscoggin, Kennebec, and Franklin Counties

Transitional Living Programs

436 Main Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 795-6048

- » Supportive Housing for Youth Ages 16–21 in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Kennebec Counties

Mental Health Services

436 Main Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 795-6048 x210

Groups and Individual Counseling with:

- » Youth Ages 12–24 Who've Experienced Homelessness
- » Confidential One-On-One or Family/Group Sessions
- » Flexible Schedules & Times; We Can Come to You!

Educational Support

134 College Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 795-4077 x214
education@newbeginmaine.org

We Help Youth in Any New Beginnings Program with:

- » Tutoring & Homework Help
- » Resumes & Job Search
- » Working On GED/HISET
- » Getting Into School or College
- » Scholarships for Education or Training

Prevention Services

134 College Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 795-4077 x208

Groups and One-On-One Appointments about:

- » Preventing HIV/STIs or Pregnancy
- » Safer Sex Info & Supplies
- » Reducing Risks from Drugs, Alcohol, Unhealthy Relationships

Administrative Offices

134 College Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
(207) 795-4077

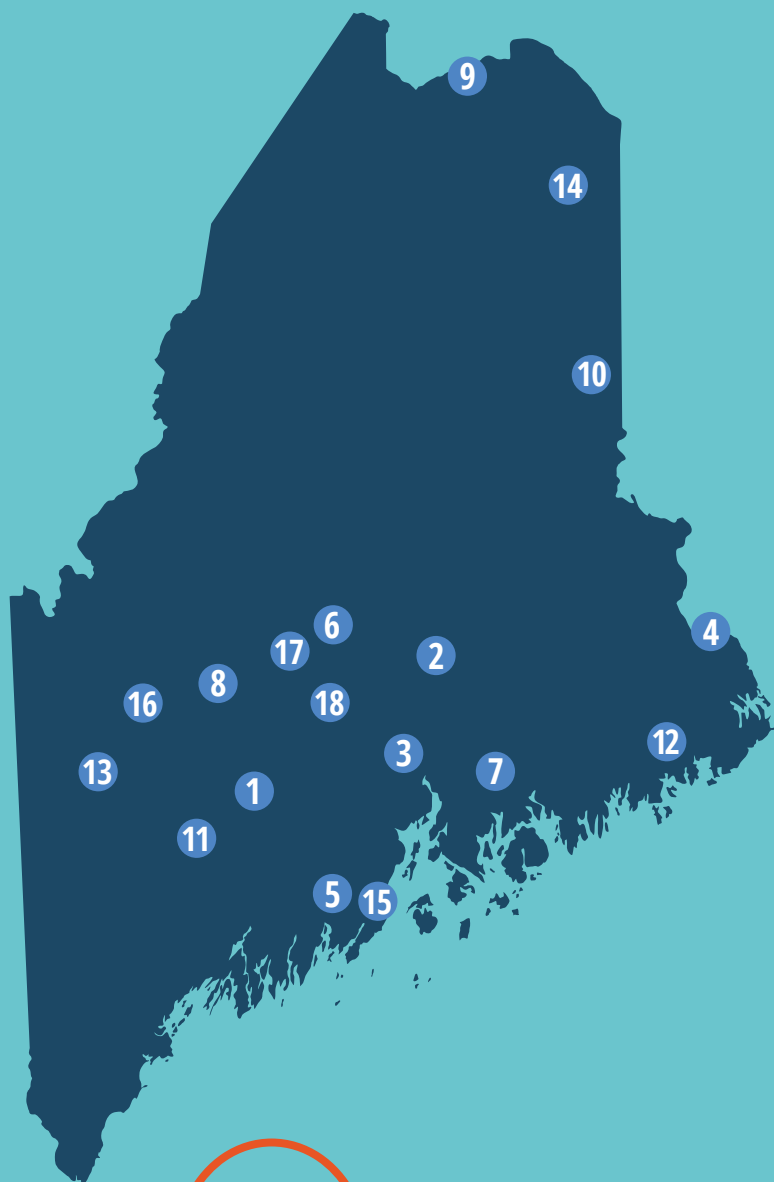
- » To request a copy of this guide, email prevention@newbeginmaine.org



24-Hour Services:
(207) 795-4070

More information at newbeginmaine.org

 **NewBeginningsInc**




maine family planning

Book an Appointment
(207) 922-3222

Clinics

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 Augusta
43 Gabriel Dr. | 9 Fort Kent
139 Market St. |
| 2 Bangor
68 Mt. Hope Ave. | 10 Houlton
91 Military St. |
| 3 Belfast
147 Waldo Ave. | 11 Lewiston
179 Lisbon St. |
| 4 Calais
10 Barker St.
Suite D | 12 Machias
247 Main St. |
| 5 Damariscotta
Pine Grove Plaza
Route 1B
767 Main St. | 13 Norway
9 Marston St. |
| 6 Dexter
311A Corinna Rd. | 14 Presque Isle
5 Martin St. |
| 7 Ellsworth
248 State St.
Suite 3A | 15 Rockland
22 White St. |
| 8 Farmington
193 Front St. | 16 Rumford
218 Penobscot St. |
| | 17 Skowhegan
188 Madison Ave. |
| | 18 Waterville
18 Silver St. |

More information at mainefamilyplanning.org

 MaineFamilyPlanning  @FPAMaine

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