



2018-2019 *annual report*

answer

sex ed, honestly

A Message From Answer's Interim Executive Director

Answer has remained steadfast in its mission of providing sex education for young people & ensuring educators are well prepared to implement high-quality sex education in the classroom.

This past year, we pursued this mission, even as we navigated a major transition in our leadership team with the departure of our executive director, Nicole Cushman, M.P.H. Nicole served as Answer's executive director for four years, and on behalf of our entire staff, I wish to thank her for her leadership and service.

At the beginning of this fiscal year, [Answer shared a new strategic plan](#)—*Sex Education: Advancing Equity & Making an Impact, 2018-2021*. While our approach to supporting young people's health and well-being remains the same, I have adjusted Answer's three strategic priorities to reflect the impact I envision our work having in communities across the country:

1. Expand young people's access to age-appropriate, medically accurate, LGBTQ-inclusive sex education.
2. Develop and leverage partnerships to reach the most vulnerable young people, including young people of color and LGBTQ young people.
3. Sustain and develop culturally relevant programs that provide sex education at every stage of young people's development.

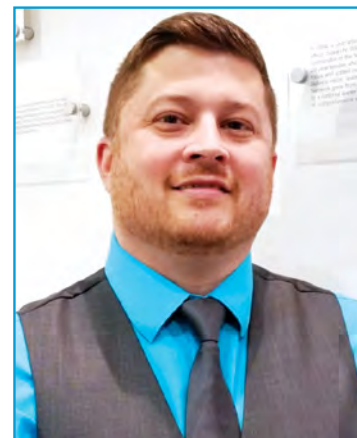
Through our focus on these strategic priorities, [Answer reached millions of young people, educators and parents](#) with educational resources and trainings; [leveraged](#)

[partnerships](#) to advance and scale high-quality teacher training across the country; and took its first steps toward ensuring the programs we create and sustain are centered in the framework of [racial and reproductive justice and LGBTQ inclusivity](#).

As you will see reflected in this annual report, Answer's staff strives every day to provide and promote sex education, all in an effort to create a nation where sexuality is recognized as a normal, healthy part of development and no young person is left in the dark or suffers in silence with misinformation. [Answer cannot do this work without the support of our generous foundation and individual donors.](#)

Thank you for being a sex education champion.

Dan Rice, M.Ed.
Interim Executive Director





strategic priority #1

Expand young people's access to age-appropriate, medically accurate, LGBTQ-inclusive sex education

Sex, Etc.

This past year, we celebrated [Sex, Etc.'s 25th anniversary of providing honest, accurate sexual health information by teens, for teens](#). In April we acknowledged this milestone with an event honoring Susan N. Wilson, MS.Ed., visionary pioneer in New Jersey sex education and founder of *Sex, Etc.* We also recognized the exceptional work of the diverse group of 16 high school students from across New Jersey, who formed the 2018-2019 staff, and the 10 national contributors from around the country. Together, they developed the content for Sexetc.org as well as three issues of *Sex, Etc.* magazine. Sexetc.org received 735,000 unique visitors in the U.S., and the magazine was distributed to thousands of students in schools, health centers and libraries across the country.

National Training Initiative

[Answer continued to provide high-quality training](#) to educators and other youth-serving professionals across the country. Through in-person and online workshops, Answer increased educators' knowledge in the areas of consent, healthy relationships, trauma-informed approaches, best practices for creating LGBTQ-inclusive classrooms and curricula, and many other topics outlined in the National Sexuality Education Standards.

AMAZE

AMAZE—our animated video series for youth ages 10 to 14, created by Answer, Advocates for Youth and Youth Tech Health (YTH)—continued to reach millions of very young adolescents via YouTube, offering developmentally appropriate and medically accurate information to this often underserved population. [AMAZE videos have been viewed over 26 million times, and the YouTube channel has over 120,000 subscribers](#). In addition, amaze jr.—our video series for the parents of children ages 4 to 9—continues to support parents in answering their children's questions, like "Where do babies come from?," in non-shaming, developmentally appropriate ways.

Foundations: Core Skills Training for Sex Ed

[Answer and Cardea Services continued to expand access to affordable, high-quality, skills-based training for educators](#) through the *Foundations: Core Skills Training for Sex Education* initiative. In our third year of the project, we grew the *Foundations* training cadre to over 100 trainers working with partner organizations in 18 states across the country, reaching 2,000 teachers (as of 2019) who teach 280,000 young people per year.

Develop & leverage partnerships to reach the most vulnerable young people, including young people of color & LGBTQ young people



Future of Sex Education (FOSE)

Through the Future of Sex Education Initiative (FOSE)—Answer’s partnership with Advocates for Youth and the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS) formed in 2007—our #SRAisAbstinenceOnly communications campaign reached three million people and educated the public and policymakers about abstinence-only programs’ re-branding as “sexual risk avoidance” (SRA). Despite these programs’ history of using misinformation, shame and ineffective scare tactics, Congress continues to fund them and their promotion of gender inequity, homophobia and transphobia. In June, FOSE and 13 partner organizations hosted a briefing in Washington, D.C., where sex educators, parents and students shared their concerns with congressional staffers (representing 29 congressional offices) about the harm these programs can cause.

Sustain & develop culturally relevant programs that provide sex education at every stage of young people’s development

Strategic Planning

Answer released its new strategic plan, which laid the foundation for developing and sustaining culturally relevant sex education programs by centering equity and social justice, reaffirming Answer’s commitments to amplify young people’s voices and leverage technology, prioritizing the needs of LGBTQ youth and young people of color, and holding Answer accountable for actually doing this important work. Over this past year, we executed a work plan that incorporates reproductive justice into the work we already do training educators and providing sexual health information to young people.

Sex Ed Collaborative (SEC)

Through the Sex Ed Collaborative (SEC)—a group of 18 national and state-based organizations—Answer is working with colleague organizations to leverage their collective networks and resources to scale professional development for educators and ultimately advance K-12 school-based sex education across the U.S. This past year, the SEC developed the groundbreaking *Professional Learning Standards for Sex Education* (PLSSE) to provide guidance for school-based educators and decision-makers on creating professional development plans for those who implement sex education in the classroom.

State Sex Ed Summit

Answer collaborated with Advocates for Youth, Planned Parenthood Federation of America and SIECUS in expanding national access to sex education through the 12th annual State Sex Education Summit, an invitation-only conference for leaders in the field of school-based sex education. Our 140 participants from schools and leading sex education agencies across the country attended in Washington, D.C. The summit focused on racial justice in sex education, including long overdue conversations about the role of white supremacy in the field, building a pipeline of leaders of color, and an exploration of the intersections between sex education and the prison industrial complex.

Staff Development Initiative

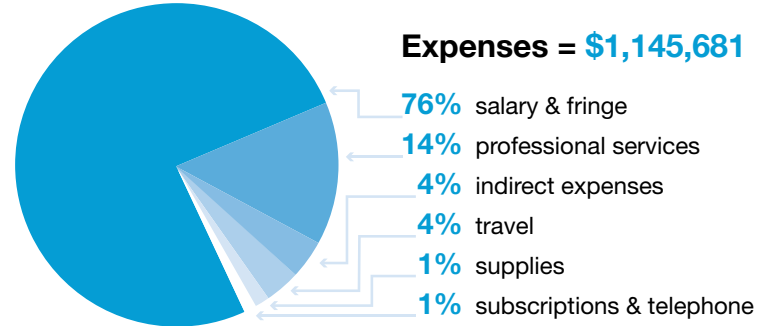
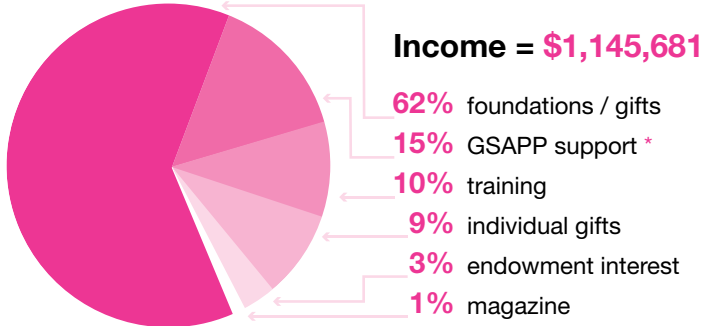
Answer launched a staff development initiative focused on racial and reproductive justice. In developing and sustaining culturally relevant programs, we must understand the historical context and the impact of systemic racism, white supremacy and intersectionality on sex education and the young people we serve. Some of our sessions have explored the work of Loretta Ross and Margaret Sanger as well as the exploitation of subjects of color in unethical research, such as the Tuskegee experiment. This year has been a year of learning and unlearning, and we look forward to taking the next steps toward advancing this important work in all aspects of the organization.

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