

Meeting the Needs of Our Nation's Adolescents: Comprehensive, Successful Approaches to Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Pre-Conference Program for the Annual Meeting of the American School Health Association

November 7, 2001, Albuquerque, NM - While teen pregnancy and birth rates have declined during the 1990s, the United States has the highest teen pregnancy and birth rates in the industrialized world. This Pre-Conference Program for the Annual Conference of the American School Health Association presented an overview of the state of U.S. teen pregnancy before addressing prevention initiatives that have been successful in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse teen population. Culturally sensitive prevention initiatives are essential in order to effectively reach all teens. The program centered on Hispanic teens, a population which is growing rapidly and has the highest teen birth rate of all racial/ethnic groups in the U.S. Male involvement is also an integral component of teen pregnancy prevention programs, particularly when it is provided in an all-male environment in which teens can talk openly. Successful teen pregnancy prevention programs have multiple components that focus on sexuality or youth development, or a combination of the two. Preventing teen pregnancy means reaching teens who are influenced by parents, peers, schools, faith-based organizations and the media - and finding innovative approaches to address their needs.

Welcome:

The Honorable Heather Wilson

Introduction:

Nancy Thorne, Vice President, Population Resource Center

Keynote:



Topic: Creating Successful Adolescents: It Takes a Nation of Caring, Knowledgeable Adults

Linda Riggsbee, President, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina

Speakers:

Panel 1: Meeting the Needs of Minority Teens

Topic: Respecting Difference and Seeking Common Ground: Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention for the Hispanic Community

Adrienne Knowles, Education Coordinator and Hispanic Outreach Director for Family Youth Services Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County

Topic: Male Involvement: A Crucial Ingredient in Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Refujio Rodriguez-Rodriguez, Department Director for Family Youth Services Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County



Panel 2: Effective Programs for Teens: Evaluation and Outcomes



Topic: The "Carrera" Model: A Holistic Approach to Empower Youth

Kathleen Baldwin, Vice President of Education and Training
Planned Parenthood of Greater Indiana, Inc.

Topic: Teen Pregnancy Prevention: A Continuum of Approaches

Linda Phillips Lehrer, Grants Manager and Community
Liaison, New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition



Factoids:

"Although the overall U.S. teen birth rate decreased 20 percent in the 1990s, it only decreased 12.5 percent for Latinas. Black, non-Hispanic teenagers had the greatest decline at 38 percent."

"Latina Teen Pregnancy: Problems and Prevention," PRC Executive Summary, October 2001



"A continuum of prevention is most effective for uniting different groups and approaches. Prevent teens from becoming sexually active, but if that doesn't work - prevent teens from becoming pregnant, but if that doesn't work - prevent or reduce the negative consequences often pregnancy."

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina, New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition

"Successful male involvement programs: get to know young men, their families and their communities; collaborate with other agencies; and actively reach out to teen males and young men."

John Hutchins, "Involving Teen Boys and Young Men in Teen Pregnancy Prevention," Get Organized: A Guide to Preventing Teen Pregnancy, September 1999

"Teen childbearing costs U.S. taxpayers about \$6.9 billion each year. Children of adolescent mothers have more developmental and other health problems. This leads to higher health costs for taxpayers of at least \$1.5 billion."

"Kids Having Kids: A Special Report on Costs of Adolescent Childbearing," Robin Hood Foundation, Washington, DC, 1996

"New Mexicans identified teen pregnancy as one of the biggest problems facing our youth, just behind drugs, poor quality of education, and lack of parental involvement."

"Tune In: New Mexico Attitudes on Sex Education," New Mexico Teen Pregnancy Coalition, January 2001

In Attendance:

Representatives from over 55 state health departments, school districts, universities, and nonprofit groups