Youth First

A Community-Wide Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative in Springfield and Holyoke

October 12, 2010
Springfield, MA
Alliance: Who We Are

Mission: to advocate statewide and mobilize communities to prevent teen pregnancy, to increase opportunities for youth and young parents, and to empower young people to make healthy decisions about relationships, sex, parenting, and life.
What We Do

Public Policy and Advocacy

Promoting Best Practices

Youth Empowerment
Why Focus on Teen Pregnancy?

- We believe that the inequity in Massachusetts teen births must be effectively addressed.
- We believe that youth gaining control of sexual choices are youth gaining control of their lives.
- We believe that the strengths of communities and families can be brought to bear to address teen pregnancy.
What Teens Need to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

1. Access to Sexual Health Information
2. Access to Condoms and Contraception for Sexually Active Youth
3. Perception of Opportunity and Hope for a Bright Future
Promoting Comprehensive Pregnancy Prevention for ALL Teens

Viable alternatives to early parenthood: something to say "YES" to

Effective programs: Sex ed in schools and teen pregnancy prevention programs in community

Access and use of condoms and contraceptives

Policies that support adolescent sexual health

Community messages that support delaying sex, parenthood, and using contraception

Parents and adults who talk with teens about sex, relationships, parenting, and life
Youth First Initiative Components

- Component 1: Implementing evidence-based and/or evidence-informed prevention programs
- Component 2: Enhancing linkages between teen pregnancy programs and community-based clinical services
- Component 3: Educating stakeholders on teen pregnancy prevention issues
- Component 4: Planning for and identifying opportunities to sustain community-wide initiatives
Why our partnership won!

Incredible alignment of goals:

- SASHA
- Holyoke Task Force
- YEAH Network
- Schools
- Community Orgs implementing EBPs
- Health Providers working to reach youth most in need
Youth First
Youth Outcomes

- Increase the percentage of youth who abstain from or delay sexual intercourse
- Increase the consistent use of condoms and other effective methods of contraception among sexually active youth
- Reduce teen pregnancy in target communities
- Reduce teen birth rates by 10% over 5 years
How Do We Get Those Outcomes?

• Increase the capacity of community partners to select, implement, and evaluate evidence-based and evidence-informed teen pregnancy prevention programs and clinical practices
• Increase capacity of clinical partners and youth organizations to effectively partner and cross-refer youth
• Increase capacity of clinical partners and youth organizations to reach youth most at-risk of teen pregnancy
• Increase adoption of state and local policies that support adolescent sexual health
• Increase number of influential adults who give a consistent message about delaying sexual activity and use of contraceptives for sexually active youth
Partner List (so far!)

School Partners
- Holyoke Public Schools
- Corporation for Public Management
- Springfield Public Schools

City Agencies
- Holyoke Board of Health
- Springfield Dept. of Health & Human Services

State Agencies
- MA Department of Public Health
- MA Department of Children and Families
- MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Community Partners
- Dunbar Community Center
- Girls Inc of Holyoke
- Puerto Rican Cultural Center
- Tapestry Health
- Planned Parenthood League of MA
- Institute for Community Health
- YWCA of Western Mass
- New North Citizens Council
- CARE Center
- TLC Building Healthy Relationships
- Teen Clinics in Holyoke Public Schools
- Holyoke Health Center
- Partners for a Healthier Community
- Roca, Inc
Community-wide Model

- **Broad-based** -- communications, outreach, media campaigns, advocacy, public policy strategies
- **Intensive** effective program implementation, providing or linking to services, parent education
Key Strategies

• Sex education
• Reproductive health services
• Programs to strengthen teens’ bonds with family and community
• Youth development and school-to-career
• Media campaigns
Key Concepts for Community

• Give teens something to say “YES” to besides sex and parenting

• No single strategy alone is sufficiently powerful to reduce teen pregnancy very much

• Make the commitment for the long-term--at least five years

• Target teens most at-risk--your geographic data mapping very useful

• Don’t leave the community behind--tailor for culture, fit with values
Program Goals

1. Increase youth access to evidence-based and/or evidence-informed programs to prevent teen pregnancy
2. Increase youth use of sexual health clinical services
3. Reduce the rates of pregnancies and births to youth in the target area
The California Story

Largest drop in teen pregnancy rate of any state 1992-2005

1. Statewide comprehensive sex education, ban on abstinence-only
2. Increased access to contraceptive services (Family PACT)
   - On-site enrollment
   - Enrollment based on teen’s income, not parents’
   - Included private physicians in contraceptive provision
   - All low income teens regardless of immigration status
   - Innovative outreach strategies
3. Media campaign to create public support for state/local policies encouraging sex ed, contraception & youth development
4. Private and public sector involvement
5. Trainings for adults in how to help youth make healthy decisions
National CDC Project

*Teenage Pregnancy Prevention: Integrating Services, Programs, and Strategies Through Community-Wide Initiatives*

Other Organizations Funded

- South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (Spartanburg & Horry Counties, SC)
- Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (Richmond County, GA)
- City of Hartford (Hartford, CT)
- Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (Gaston County, NC)
- Fund for Public Health in New York (South Bronx, NYC)
- Family Planning Council (West Philadelphia, Phila., PA)
- University of Texas, San Antonio (Bexar County, TX)
- Title X Grantee: Alabama Dept. of Public Health (Mobile County, AL)
National CDC Project

Teenage Pregnancy Prevention: Integrating Services, Programs, and Strategies Through Community-Wide Initiatives

National Organizations
- National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy
- Advocates for Youth
- Healthy Teen Network
- Cicatelli Associates
- JSI Research & Training Institute

These organizations will provide training and technical assistance support to the Alliance and other grantees across the project.
Next Steps

• Finalize budget/workplan with CDC
• Increase internal capacity at Alliance and YEAH: hire and train staff, orientation to project in Atlanta in January
• Develop Core Planning Group
• Develop Youth and Community Advisories
• Key informant interviews
• Conduct resource/program inventory
• Conduct needs assessments (community and partners)
• Youth led assessment of condom and contraceptive access
Next Steps: October - December

• Email to members of Core Planning Group (early November)
• Convening of Core Planning Group (December)
What do we need to know?

- Current evidence based programming in Springfield and Holyoke- CBOs, schools, clinics
- Who else wants to do evidence based programming in Holyoke and Springfield?
- Who is reaching the youth at highest risk? DCF, DYS, Drop out, homeless/runaway, older teens, teen parents, GLBTQ youth
- How are current TPP program providers resourcing implementation?
What do we need to know?

- Are there science/evidence based communications strategies to increase contraceptive support?
- What have clinical/family planning orgs done to increase support for youth contraceptive use? What has worked/not worked?
- How strong are the linkages between clinics and TPP program providers (CBOs, schools, etc)?
- How youth friendly are adolescent clinical services across all providers?
What do we need to know?

- How do values interact with life circumstances to influence rates of teen birth?
- What risk and protective factors related to teen pregnancy are most important for which groups?
- What is the impact of gender role norms on teen pregnancy risk?
- How can important cultural values be brought to bear on healthy sexual decision-making?
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