

Teen Pregnancy Meeting
May 25, 2007

Follow-up

1. **What are some effective programs?** Everyone is asked to bring effective programs to the next meeting or email them to Jim at jimgeiser3@cox.net.
2. **Everyone was also asked to send a list (or whatever) of what their agency or group is doing in relation to teen pregnancy.**
3. **At the next meeting the group will begin brainstorming elements of this comprehensive, community-wide sex education policy.**
4. **At the next meeting the group will continue defining the structure, accountability measures, and leadership of the group.**

INITIATIVE: Reduce the teen pregnancy rate by 25% by December 2010 through providing comprehensive teen pregnancy prevention programs at schools, in places of worship, and in communities.

Present: Claude Burnett, Rick Dunn, Dr. Dionne Godette, Mary hood, Tim Johnson, Cassondra Jones, Lou Kudon, Cheryl Legette, Marcia Massengale, George Maxwell, Denise Mewborn, Hilary Ruston, Nancy MacNair, Holly Cirri, Mila Blake, Sherry Crader

Tim welcomed everyone and thanked them for their willingness to serve on the teen pregnancy prevention implementation team. Everyone introduced themselves.

Tim went over the Ground Rules and shared that these meetings are open to the public.

Ground Rules

- **Our meetings are open to the public; everyone is welcome to attend.**
- **Only team members will be allowed to participate in the discussion during the meeting.**
- **Public comments and input will be welcome during the last 15 minutes of the meeting.**
- **No personal attacks.**
- **Discussions must remain on the initiative being discussed**

Tim mentioned that the team needed to define their “product” by June 4 (what is this team going to produce to achieve the initiative) and have this product finalized by June 18 and have a plan to achieve this product by the end of July. At the end of August a community meeting will be held to report back on all the initiatives.

The group then began the discussion with some brainstorming of “What works?” What doesn’t? and What’s missing?”

Some things that work:

- Abstinence
- Birth Control
- Providing sex education facts (education)
- Quality activities for teens that keep them engaged and setting goals

Some other conversations around these topics included:

- There is apparently a consensus that people are in favor of birth control (71%).
- There is a need to educate parents about how to talk to their kids.
- There is a need to focus on males and females.

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- There is a need to develop a collective understanding as to how to address teen pregnancy comprehensively as a community.
- There are insufficient services to address the teen pregnancy issue in Clarke County. (The Health Department has gone from 3 to 1 nurses, the schools are understaffed.)
- Community-Based Programs in Recreation programs, schools, Boys and Girls Clubs have been successful. They are perceived as being able to say things that public school personnel cannot say.
- Peer counselors can also be effective.
- Perhaps there is a need to find a way to coordinate Public Health Educators and School Nurses.
- “What are the best and most comprehensive things to teach?” The Unitarian Church apparently has a very comprehensive program they teach.
- The Faith-Based community needs to get involved. There is a need to check with the PPA Minister’s Group. Some other suggestions (Rev. LaRoca(?) Pitts and Rev. Brenda Burton at Athens Regional and Rev Mosley at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church.)
- Perhaps using graduation coaches and social workers from the school system
- Y-Try and other character building programs are good.
- Align all the programs together.
- Do a comprehensive review of the Health Education and sex education policy of the School Board.
- Even though there may be some flexibility in the school system sex education policy, the legal challenges are great.
- It was suggested that teen pregnancies be broken into two groups for data purposes; 17 and under, 18 and 19
- It was mentioned that there are two focuses—Preventing the first pregnancy, and second, working with teen parents to prevent a second pregnancy.
- Does signing a contract, i.e. at Performance Learning Center, that says they will not have more children until graduation actually work?
- Does having Early Childhood Centers at schools discourage future pregnancies?
- There must be a focus on families as well as adolescents.
- Teen pregnancy tends to go from generation to generation. There must be work with the parents as well to break the cycle.
- People need to see the big picture.
- The responsibility of the fathers; the community must hold high expectations for them.
- Many of these girls have self-esteem issues.
- Teen Matters talks to the kids.
- There needs to be consistency in what is taught in the sex ed/health curriculum at each high school.
- There needs to be clarification on guest speakers coming to talk in the schools. For example it is very difficult to get speakers to come in and talk about AIDS.
- The legal ramifications may be impacting this. The parents have the option to have their children not participate in these discussions.
- It was also mentioned that productive activities must be developed for middle school and teenage students. These activities are what is often missing.
- Girls often get pregnant during the after school hours and summer vacation. Girls with goals don’t get pregnant.

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Some other groups/persons that were suggested to be involved:

- Get the two students on the committee.
- Expand the voice of the family on the committee.
- Someone from Human Ecology
- Neonatology and Obstetrician
- Rep. Keith Heard
- Someone from Housing Authority
- Someone who is or was a teen parent.
- Representative from Juvenile Justice

The need for a comprehensive community-wide sex education policy was emphasized. It was mentioned that Family Connections has such a policy. Unfortunately it has not been adopted by the community; groups are primarily still working in isolation. Perhaps OneAthens could help sponsor and develop this comprehensive policy so that it would actually be implemented.

The importance of evaluation was emphasized. There must be accountability to know if what is being done is working. Some suggestions:

- Monitor the teen pregnancy rates more frequently.
- Have each agency bring their data together.
- Use BART and possibly Athens Pregnancy Center.

There have been programs that have sent teens home from the hospital with birth control pills.

There is a need to educate the community about the long-term impact of teen pregnancy.

There was discussion about the possible need for teens to have access to services without permission from parents. This was discussed.

It was mentioned that we have to be realistic. Kids checking out of school and getting free access to birth control may not be in the realm of reality.

It was once again emphasized that there are many issues that prevent or inhibit schools from being able to provide all these services. Perhaps after school programming with other agencies could be developed. Logistics would need to be worked out.

Where does the group go from here?

5. Jim will pull these notes together and send them by Wednesday.
6. What are some effective programs? Everyone is asked to bring effective programs to the next meeting or email them to Jim at jimgeiser3@cox.net.
7. Everyone was also asked to send a list (or whatever) of what their agency or group is doing in relation to teen pregnancy.
8. At the next meeting the group will begin brainstorming elements of this comprehensive, community-wide sex education policy.
9. At the next meeting the group will continue defining the structure and leadership of the group.

The next meeting is scheduled for 8:30-10:00 at the Health Department on June 1.