Assessing Resources and Gaps in Preventing Teen Pregnancy in Dallas

Mandy Golman PhD, MCHES
Nila Ricks, PhD, LMSW
Courtney Peters, PhD, LMSW
Tootie Kassimus, MPH
Sheila Bustillos Reylords

Our vision is that every young person in our community has the opportunity to set goals, plan education and careers, and become self-sufficient before entering into parenthood.

The North Texas Alliance to Reduce Teen Pregnancy is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that seeks to improve the quality of life for children, families, and communities by preventing unintended teen pregnancies.

Why is it important, here?
- Texas’ teen birth rate of 41 births to teens aged 15-19 years per 1,000 is significantly higher than the national average of 27 births per 1,000 at females in 2012. Dallas’ teen birth rate is 50.5 births per 1,000.
- Texas ranked fourth in the nation among the 50 states for highest teen birth rates both in 2012 and in 2013, and #1 in repeat teen births.
- Texas spends 1.1 BILLION public dollars annually on teen childbearing out of a total of 9.4 BILLION spent annually in the United States.

Dallas Zip Code Birth Rates

http://www.ntarupt.org
Methods

• Focus groups
  • Parents, teens, teen parents in the 5 zip codes (44 parents, 32 teens)

• Surveys
  • Medical providers (20), Educators (45), & service providers (36)
  • Teen surveys (71)

Results - Teen Surveys (n=71)
Service Providers

Medical Providers

Teen Barriers to Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency cannot Access Youth</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Agency Funding</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth do not Know About Us</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are not Supportive</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Health Insurance</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Transportation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What sexual health services do you provide teens?

- HIV testing: 56%
- STI testing: 90%
- Pap smears: 36%
- Birth control prescription: 68%
- Emergency contraception: 94%
Rate the following based on what teens need (always a need)

- Confidential health services: 89%
- Parental communication: 74%
- Healthy relationship info/support: 72%
- Parental support: 72%
- Sex education: 84%

Educators

Is teen pregnancy an issue on your campus?

- Yes: 21%
- No: 71%

How would you describe sex education on your campus?

- Sex ed is comprehensive: 12%
- Not allowed to discuss pregnancy options: 17%
- Abstinence is emphasized: 50%
- Not allowed to discuss contraception: 29%
- Sex ed relies on scare tactics: 24%
- Students receive info too late: 45%
What barriers prevent you from providing teens with information to prevent unintended pregnancy?

- Confidentiality: 29%
- School rules: 62%
- State laws: 56%
- Fear of: 58%
- Lack of parental support: 47%
- Funding: 40%
- Education materials: 47%
- Time: 36%

What factors put young people that you work with at greatest risk of unintended pregnancy?

- Lack of contraception use: 91%
- Lack of access to contraception: 72%
- Lack of education about contraception use: 49%
- Lack of career/education goals: 62%
- Lack of supportive partners: 58%

Preliminary Themes

- Comprehensive Sexual Health Education
- Parent Education and Support
- Increased Linkages to Services
- Focus on Goals and future
- Healthy Relationships

Comprehensive Sexual Health Education

- In the focus groups, almost unanimously parents discussed welcoming assistance in the form of comprehensive sexual education for their teens. A frequent concern that came up was “how do you teach kids about contraceptive and not be giving permission?”

- Teens surveyed felt that “people talk about sex...but nobody REALLY talks about sex.”
Parent Education and Support

- Many parents felt they had very little influence compared to friends and media. They are “open to talking but it is embarrassing.”
- Other parents discussed that they frequently talk with their child, but the message typically sound like, “Don’t bring home no baby.”
- Teens repeated hearing these same messages.
- Teens felt that they would prefer if parents would have the “birth control” discussion early in their teenage years so it would “feel less embarrassing…like they know” and they would be prepared and not have to ask later.

Increased Linkages to Services

- Focus group discussions around services found that most parents were really not aware of where to take a teen.
- Teens discussed learning where to go from friends, but lack of parental support was a barrier for most. One teen said, “I asked my mom if she would get me on the pill for the future and she told me “No!”” Teens discussed that “parents need to understand that teens are going to have sex at some point.”

Focus on Future

- Parents discussed kids need goal setting and financial literacy
  
  “You see how with me, I have to work, I have to leave you and I don’t want that for you. I want you to work and be someone that does not have to depend on another. (Inaudible) house work, how beautiful. To have a man that responds for you, how beautiful. I did not have that. We had to struggle. I want you to have a man so that you do not fall into what I fell into, because for me my mom, unfortunately, she did not talk me, ‘hey, take care of yourself, or hey you know you will have these equal.’”

- Pay Now or Pay Later
  
  “I think condoms or like any kind of birth control is almost like the whole fast food and healthy food thing. Like it’s easier to access. Healthy food is way more expensive than fast food. So it’s like condoms or birth controls are harder to get condoms versus not having condoms so it’s like the healthy food it’s harder to get healthier food or it’s more expensive versus fast food so you take the easy way out and just simply go get you a cheeseburger or not use a condom.”

- Teen Parenting as a social norm
  
  “Yeah, everybody is pregnant at my school…”

Healthy Relationships

- “I was on birth control until I moved in with my boyfriend”
  
  “That’s why I just stay single because I already know it’s hard for me to stay faithful.”

- “My baby momma, if I want it I’mma get it”
  
  “I said like if you just tell a girl oh get birth control and you don’t even talk about it she gone get mad and start (Break in Transmission) you don’t want to be with me. You plan to leave me later on in the future.”

- “If we be like get birth control. She gone be like, ‘oh so you don’t want to have a baby with me?’ Daaaaamn.”
Overcoming Challenges

• Survey participation
• Permission from schools
• Collaborating with a large team or large partnerships

Conclusions

• Implement TPP to Scale
• Continue Community Mobilization
• Focus on Teen Pregnancy Social Norms
• Increased Focus on Healthy Relationships