

**Promoting What Works:  
A Symposium of Approaches for Supporting Pregnant and Parenting Adolescents  
May 18, 2011, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Top of the Hill Banquet and Conference Center  
Washington, D.C.**

**Where are the gaps, challenges and opportunities for action?**

**Session Biographies**

**Evelyn Kappeler**

**Acting Director, Office of Adolescent Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

Evelyn Kappeler is the Acting Director of the Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). As a senior manager, she is responsible for the administration as well as policy and program development of the OAH. The new Office of Adolescent Health will coordinate adolescent health programs and initiatives across the Department while focusing on many of the interrelated health needs of adolescents such as those related to mental health, violence, substance use, sexual behavior, nutrition and physical activity and tobacco use. The OAH is also responsible for implementing and administering a new \$110 million teen pregnancy prevention initiative. Ms. Kappeler has more than twenty years of experience in public health as a senior policy analyst in the Office of Population Affairs (OPA). Most recently, Ms. Kappeler was the Acting Director for OPA, with responsibility for overseeing the national Family Planning Program authorized under Title X of the Public Health Service Act (PHSA) and the Adolescent Family Life (AFL) program authorized under Title XX of the PHSA. Ms. Kappeler joined the Federal Government as a policy research associate in the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Before coming to HHS, Ms. Kappeler worked as a legislative analyst in the Washington, D.C. Office of the Governor of the State of Illinois.

**Lara Kaufmann, J.D.**

**Senior Counsel for Education and Employment, National Women's Law Center**

Lara S. Kaufmann is Senior Counsel for Education and Employment at the National Women's Law Center, where she focuses on the advancement of women and girls at school and in the workplace. Lara engages in litigation, advocacy, and public education, with a particular focus on improving educational outcomes for at-risk girls, including pregnant and parenting students. Lara co-authored the Center's 2009 report, *Listening to Latinas: Barriers to High School Graduation*. Before joining the Center, Lara was a Staff Attorney with the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Consumer Protection, and prior to that she was an Assistant United States Attorney in Chicago. Lara also worked with the law firm of McDermott, Will & Emery, and was law clerk to then-Chief Judge Marvin Aspen of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. Lara is a graduate of the University of Michigan and Northwestern University School of Law.

**Deborah Koniak-Griffin, EdD, RNC, FAAN**

**Professor, Section Chair, Primary Care School of Nursing, University of California, Los Angeles**

Dr. Deborah Koniak-Griffin is Professor and Audrienne H. Moseley Endowed Chair in Women's Health Research, and Director of the Center for Vulnerable Populations Research at the School of Nursing, University of California at Los Angeles, and a nurse-practitioner in women's health. Her research, spanning more than two decades, is focused on understanding risk behaviors in adolescents, particularly pregnant and parenting teens, and designing interventions to promote their health. She has worked extensively with adolescents from Latino and African American backgrounds. Her numerous publications address issues in maternal-child health, adolescent pregnancy, and AIDS prevention. She has been the principal investigator on three large adolescent pregnancy studies funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research. Dr. Koniak-Griffin's extensive speaking experience includes government and other invitational presentations, clinical and research papers, and visiting professorships.

**Jeannette Pai-Espinosa, M.S.**

**President, The National Crittenton Foundation**

A firm believer in the power and potential of all girls and young women, Jeannette Pai-Espinosa assumed leadership of The National Crittenton Foundation in January of 2007. Jeannette brings to this 124-year-old institution more than thirty years of experience in advocacy, education, intercultural communication, public policy, strategic communication, program development, and direct service delivery. Jeannette began her career as a vocal advocate and activist for issues of importance to girls and women in the early seventies, working to open doors and address gender bias. Today, she is a nationally known as an expert on issues related to increasing ethnic and racial diversity in communities. Prior to coming to The Foundation, Jeannette was a partner for nearly ten years at Metropolitan Group. Jeannette holds a master's degree in student development and education administration.

**Marline Pearson, M.A.**

**Author, Educator, The Dibble Institute**

Marline Pearson is a longtime sociology/criminology instructor at Madison Area Technical College (a two-year community college) who has created innovative programs for youth and adults that integrate healthy relationships, pregnancy and violence prevention, and youth development. Love Notes: Making Relationships Work, geared to 16-24 year olds, targets at risk teens and young adults, including young parents. It has been integrated into Youth Build USA programs, teen parent programs and Job Corps and is currently in a Tier II evaluation study. Love U2: Relationship Smarts PLUS (8 – 12th grade) has just completed a five-year evaluation in the state of Alabama with over 5,000 diverse teens. Within My Reach, co-authored by Pearson with Scott Stanley and Galena Kline Rhoades, is a relationship skills and decision-making program for helping individuals (mostly single parents) who struggle with economic disadvantages and who are at risk for unstable or poorer quality relationships.

Pearson has pioneered a unique relationship skills class at the college that has been featured in Time Magazine and in a PBS special and companion book. Pearson is frequently called upon to discuss teen and young adult relationships and has conducted numerous trainings on teen and adult relationships, sexuality, and pregnancy prevention. Pearson co-authored, Making a Love Connection: Teen Relationships, Pregnancy, and Marriage, a report commissioned and published by The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy. Other publications include, "Reaching for Higher Ground: New Approaches to Teen Sexuality," published in the Journal of Council on Family Relations.

**Darlene Shearer, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

**MPH Program Director, Department of Public Health, Western Kentucky University**

Dr. Shearer joined the faculty of the Department of Public Health at Western Kentucky University in the fall of 2008 and serves as the Director of the Masters of Public Health program. Prior to obtaining her doctoral degree she worked extensively with families and maternal and child health populations, including 20 years caring for preterm and low birth-weight infants, conducting assessments and interventions with at-risk infants and their families, supervising and training hospital and community-based health care personnel, and directing a research and demonstration home visitation program for adolescent mothers in which she developed and implemented training for the program's lay home visitors.

Dr. Shearer's research has focused primarily on evaluation of intervention strategies and programs for children and families as well as studying statewide service utilization, access to health care, and health risk behaviors (correlated with functional ability) of clients in a state mental health/mental retardation system. Her particular interests include influences on developmental gains in at risk children and children with disabilities, contextual factors that influence family adaptation to having a child with a disability, and their participation in the child's intervention as well as effectiveness of home visiting models for at risk children and families. Throughout her career as an educator in the United States and abroad, she has studied the effectiveness of home-based early intervention programs for families with young children in a variety of cultures.

**Diana Tyson, Ph.D.**

**Social Science Analyst, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE)**

Dr. Diana Tyson is a Social Science Analyst in the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE). She joined ASPE in 2008 as a Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Policy Fellow. Prior to joining the Federal Government, She completed her graduate studies focusing on the transition into adolescence and middle school with an emphasis on topics such as the role of parent involvement, motivation for academic success, emotion regulation in test taking environments, and components of effective after school programs. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology and a certificate in Education Policy Psychology from Duke University.

Dr. Tyson's current activities include policy analysis and research related to youth at risk. Specifically, she has been a project officer on the teen pregnancy prevention portfolio, examining programs and policies that aim to reduce the risk for teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and risky sexual behavior. She is co-project officer for the following research projects: Teen Pregnancy Prevention: A Feasibility and Design Study; A Review of the Evidence Base: Identifying Programs that Impact Teen Pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Infections, and Associated Sexual Risk Behaviors; The Influence of New Media on Adolescent Sexual Activity; and State of the Science and Practice in Parenting Interventions across Childhood.