



## Success Story: Massachusetts Department of Public Health

### *Providing Innovative Wrap-Around Services for Young Parents*

The Massachusetts Pregnant and Parenting Teens Initiative (MPPTI) provides wraparound services (medial, social, emotional and community supports) to over 500 pregnant and parenting young people ages 14 through 24 in high schools and community centers. The services are located in five high-needs communities in Massachusetts: Chelsea, Holyoke, Lawrence, New Bedford, and Springfield. These communities all have teen birth rates roughly double the national average and between three and five times higher than the statewide average (Mass. Department of Public Health (2010), Births (Vital Records), *MA Community Health Information Profile version 3.00 r327*). Using funds from the Office of Adolescent Health's Pregnancy Assistance Fund, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health contracted with community-based agencies in these communities to transform the lives of pregnant and parenting teens. MPPTI has three main goals:

1. Achievement of educational and vocational goals,
2. Delay subsequent pregnancy, and
3. Improve infant health and development.

In order to meet these goals, MPPTI emphasizes social, emotional, and community support for pregnant and parenting young people. To provide such support, the program has adopted a strengths-based approach. Participants work with service providers to identify their educational, employment, and health goals and the barriers they perceive standing in their way to goal achievement. MPPTI service providers reported that many participants have never been asked to identify their strengths. Using this method of engagement, participants feel empowered and desire to work towards attaining their life goals.

In addition to identifying goals and barriers, service providers also assist pregnant and parenting teens by connecting them to resources that address their unique needs. For example, participants are often connected to mental health counseling, social support, childcare, transportation, housing, and/or health care. Each MPPTI location employs case managers, education liaisons, mental health counselors, and home-visiting nurses to assist in supporting and meeting the needs of young parents and their children. In order to maximize participation and help teens connect with their peer participants are offered a hot meal, childcare and transportation.

To learn about one participant's success in the program, click the link to view her digital story: <http://vimeo.com/68626408>.



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