Who You Gonna Call?
Setting Up Referral Networks

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Presenters

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Objective

Why are we here?

Referring youth for health services takes some skill to do well. After this webinar, you’ll know:

- What makes for an effective referral system,
- Some ways you can improve a health referral system and address common challenges, and
- What OAH requires regarding health referrals.
Agenda (“Inside this Webinar…”)

- Introductions
- Youth-Friendly Principles
- Importance of Youth-Friendly Principles in Teen Pregnancy Work (OAH expectations)
- How to Implement a Health Referral System
- Q&A
- Closing
In your chat box

What are one or two words that describe how you feel about making referrals for youth to services and programs in your community?
Youth-Friendly Services…

- Provide accessible location and hours
- Create a warm and respectful environment
- Maintain confidentiality
- Ensure opportunities for private conversations
- Provide age-appropriate explanations for adolescents to give informed consent
- Offer comprehensive services
- Encourage youth to involve parents/guardians while respecting their privacy
Examples of Youth-Friendly Resources

Characteristics of Youth-Friendly Clinical Services

- Youth-friendly systems
  - Youth feedback is sought and incorporated
  - Affordable fees
  - Boys and young men welcomed and appointed
  - Wide range of services available including reproductive health care, STI testing and treatment
  - Use of numbers instead of names in documents
  - System to "red flag" youth with partners
  - Flexible hours offering lunch, evening, and weekend appointments
  - Well-established mechanism to allow for appointment availability
  - Use of first names by all clinic staff
  - Walk-ins welcome and appointments accepted
  - Participation in the federal 340B drug discount program

A Teen-Friendly Reproductive Health Visit

A counselor meets with Jason in a private room. He states that he has a girlfriend but they do not feel ready to have sex. The counselor encourages Jason not to have sex if either he or his girlfriend do not feel ready, and explains that Jason and his girlfriend can come to the clinic any time with questions, for birth control, or to get tested.

Teen Self-Advocacy: How To Be Your Own Healthcare Advocate

A Brief Overview

This paper provides research-based information on youth-friendly clinical services—specifically for family planning clinicians and other professionals who provide health care for youth—and offers an overview of the recent medical and public health literature regarding key components of youth-friendly clinical services. Confidentially, respectfully, and without low-income as obstacles to care.
Adolescent Health: Think, Act, Grow SM (TAG)

- Access to high-quality, teen-friendly health care
- Coordinated, adolescent- and family-centered services, as needed

Key considerations:

- High-quality
- Adolescent- and family-centered
- Coordinated
FOA: Establish and maintain linkages and referrals to youth-friendly health care services

- Identify and recruit organizations and healthcare professionals within the community(ies) who provide a wide range of high quality healthcare services for youth.

- Assess identified organizations and providers to ensure services provided are youth friendly and accessible. It is recommended to visit providers identified as offering youth-friendly services to collect information on ease of access, location, transportation options, accessibility, and receptiveness of staff.
Referrals and Linkages to Youth-Friendly Health Care Services

What are Youth-Friendly Health Care Services?
Youth-friendly health care services are those that attract young people, respond to their needs, and retain young clients for continuing care. Youth-friendly services are based on a comprehensive understanding of what young people want and need (rather than being based only on what providers believe youth need). Adolescents are often reluctant to seek health care services and it is important to find ways to offer care in a manner that adolescents perceive as welcoming, comfortable, and responsive.

The goal is to provide all young people with services they trust and which they feel are designed for them. Key components of youth-friendly health care services include:

- Providing accessible location and hours;
- Creating a warm and respectful environment;
- Maintaining confidentiality;
- Ensuring opportunities for private conversations;
- Providing age-appropriate explanations for adolescents to give informed consent for services;
- Offering comprehensive services; and
- Encouraging youth to involve parents/guardians while respecting their privacy.

Developing an Effective Referral System
It is important to recognize that the youth we serve in our teen pregnancy prevention programs (TPP) have many different needs that we aren’t always able to address directly through the TPP program. To ensure that the youth we serve are able to access needed health care and other critical services, it is important for TPP programs to have a system in place for referring and linking youth to youth-friendly services that are available in their communities.

Types of Services to Consider Including in your Referral System:
- Reproductive Health (e.g., family planning, STI testing and treatment, etc.)
- Mental Health (e.g., depression, suicide, etc.)
- Substance Abuse
- Primary Care (e.g., well check, vaccines, etc.)
- Non-health care services (e.g., housing, education, job training, etc.)

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Referral vs. Referral System

**Referral**
The term “referral” is used to describe a process of assisting youth in obtaining preventive health services through a variety of activities, including but not limited to, connecting students to youth-friendly providers and support services.

**Referral System**
A set of resources and processes to increase youth awareness of school-based and community-based health service providers, increase referrals of youth to school-based and community-based health service providers, and increase the number of adolescents receiving youth-friendly health care services.

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OAH Expectations

- Develop protocols and procedures for how referrals to healthcare services will be made by the grantee and partner organizations, and how often the information will be updated to ensure accuracy.

- Develop and disseminate a provider referral guide for youth and their families.

- Identify and train key staff in organizations responsible for making referrals to youth to ensure awareness of available services and familiarity with referral protocols and procedures.
Grantees are only required to report the number of referrals made in the following categories that cover health and other youth-related services:

- Off-site providers or SBHCs for Reproductive Health Care services
- Mental Health Services
- Primary Health Care
- Educational Services
- Vocational Education/Workforce Development Services
- Intimate Partner Violence Prevention services
- Healthy Relationships Training
Grantees are only required to evaluate the components that are aligned with OAH’s requirements such as development and dissemination of the provider referral guide and assessment of youth-friendliness of referral sites.
Grantees are NOT expected to:

- Track and evaluate the receipt of services

However, if a grantee is able to track and evaluate receipt of services effectively, they may do so.
Referral System Implementation Kit

Referral System

**CORE COMPONENTS**

1. Policy
2. Referral Staff
3. Procedures
4. Referral Guide
5. Communications & Marketing
6. Monitoring & Evaluation
7. Management & Oversight

**OUTCOMES**

**Short and Intermediate-term**

- Increased Adolescent Awareness of SHS Providers
- Increased Referral of Adolescents to SHS Providers
- Increased Number of Sexually Active Adolescents Receiving SHS

**Long-term**

- Decreased STD, HIV and Pregnancy Rates among Adolescents
- Increased Educational Attainment
Key policy areas that impact the implementation of referral systems and adolescents’ access to sexual health services

- Confidentiality
- Minor’s Right to Consent
  - [https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/spibs/spib_OMCL.pdf](https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/spibs/spib_OMCL.pdf)
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
Champions who advocate for and facilitate adolescent access to health services.

- Are identified and selected as designated referral staff
- Receive training and regular updates
Procedures

1. Build rapport with the youth
2. Ensure confidentiality and consent
3. Identify youth needs
4. Select the appropriate service(s) and provider(s)
5. Make the referral
6. Follow-up after the referral
Referral Guide

- **Guide**
  - Paper-based or electronic resource that lists health resource provider organizations

- **Partners**
  - Involves informal and formal relationship building with schools, public health departments, other community-based healthcare providers, and youth-serving organizations
Sample Referral Guide

Communications & Marketing

- A strategy to raise awareness among:
  - Referral Staff
  - Adolescents
Monitoring & Evaluation

How do we know we are making the change we want to see?

- Counting/tracking referrals made
  - A physical or electronic counting log
  - Youth reports (e.g., Youth Risk Behavior Survey)

- Counting/tracking referrals actualized
  - Data sharing agreements between organizations
  - Follow-up with youth
Management & Oversight

- Use of evaluation data for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Update professional development/training initiatives
- Maintain relationships with community health services partners
- Update referral guide
- Assess ongoing policy landscapes
Organizational Partnerships

- Identify partners
- Involve stakeholders
- Assess and strengthen partnerships

Common Concerns for Referral Implementation
Program Setting

- Examine the types of partner agencies
- Understand the importance of working together
  - Identify service area gaps
  - Explore new partnerships
Creating vs. Expanding a Referral Network
Creating a New Referral Network

7 Key Activities to the Referral Guide Development Process:

1. Decide What Information to Include in the Guide
2. Gather a list of Potential SHS Healthcare Providers
3. Identify Services Provided by SHS Providers
4. Finalize SHS Provider List
5. Design, Produce, and Publish Guide
6. Train and Disseminate
7. Update and Maintain Referral Guide
Expanding an Existing Referral Network

- Assess current providers in the network
- Identify gaps in providers
- Identify and assess new providers to fill the gaps
Regional referral guides

A Safe & Confidential Guide for 13+

Most Services Require No Consent
Rural Communities

- **Strategic Partnerships**
  - Federally Qualified Health Centers
  - Local Health Departments
  - Community Centers

- **Strategies**
  - Provide transportation
  - Preceptorship model
Using Technology
Questions? Comments?

Options for asking a question:

- Q&A box at the top of your screen
- *1 on your phone
UMHS Adolescent Health Initiative

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Resources

• Office of Adolescent Health Referrals and Linkages to Youth-Friendly Health Care Services Tip sheet:

• CDC-Division of Reproductive Health Teen-Friendly Clinic Infographic:

• Advocates for Youth Best Practices for Youth-Friendly Services:

• Healthy Teen Network Youth-Friendly Clinical Services Tip sheet:
  http://www.healthyteennetwork.org/sites/default/files/TipSheet_CharacteristicsYouth-FriendlyClinicalServices_0.pdf

• CAI Global Health Referral System:
  http://caiglobal.co/j_con/index.php/referral-kit-download
Resources

- Adolescent Health Initiative Find a Provider:  

- Adolescent Health Initiative Youth Driven Videos:  

- Adolescent Health Initiative Creating and Sustaining a Thriving Youth Advisory Council:  
Feedback Survey
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