

# Supporting Expectant and Parenting Teens: Practical Recommendations from the Field

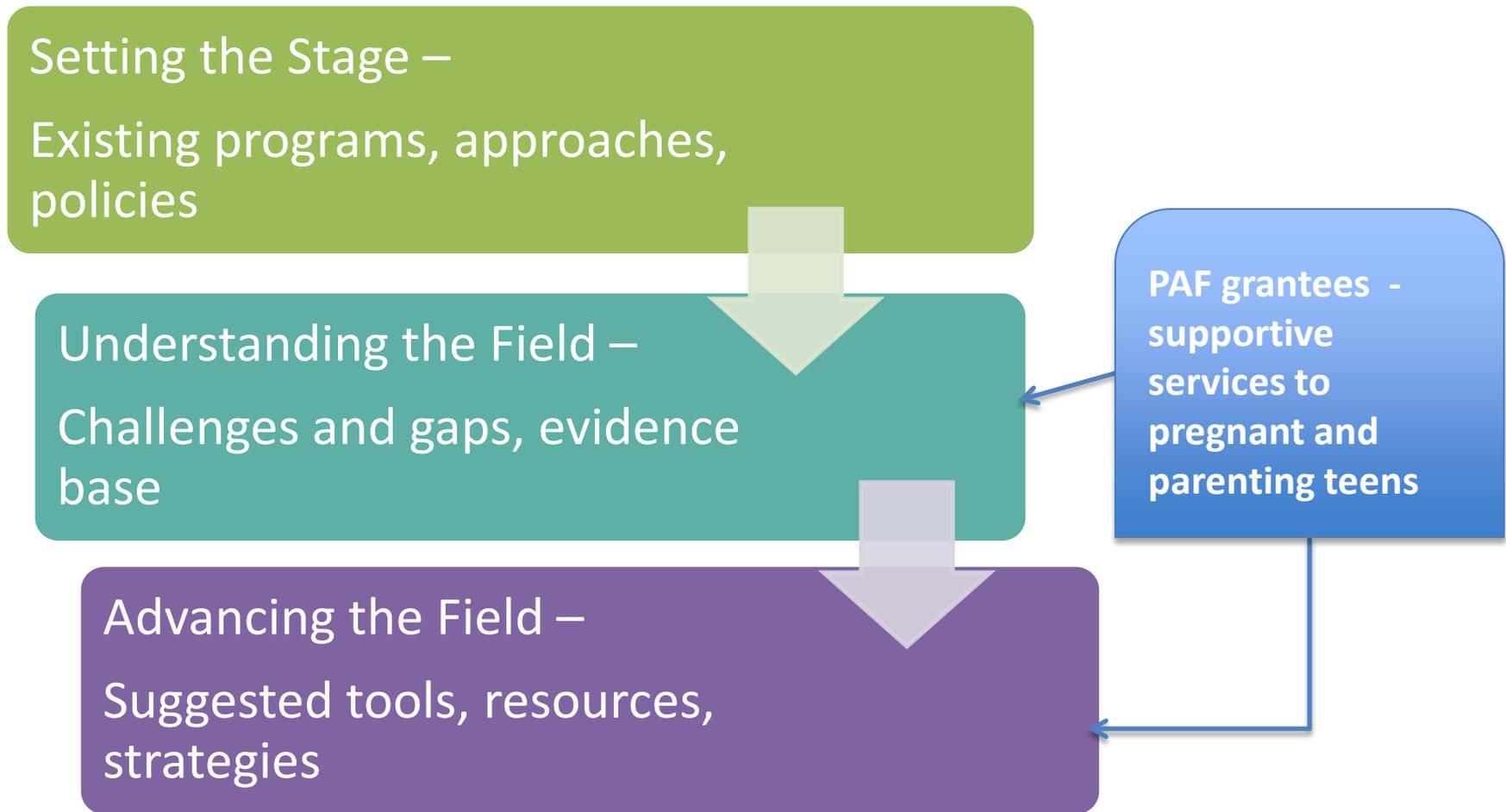


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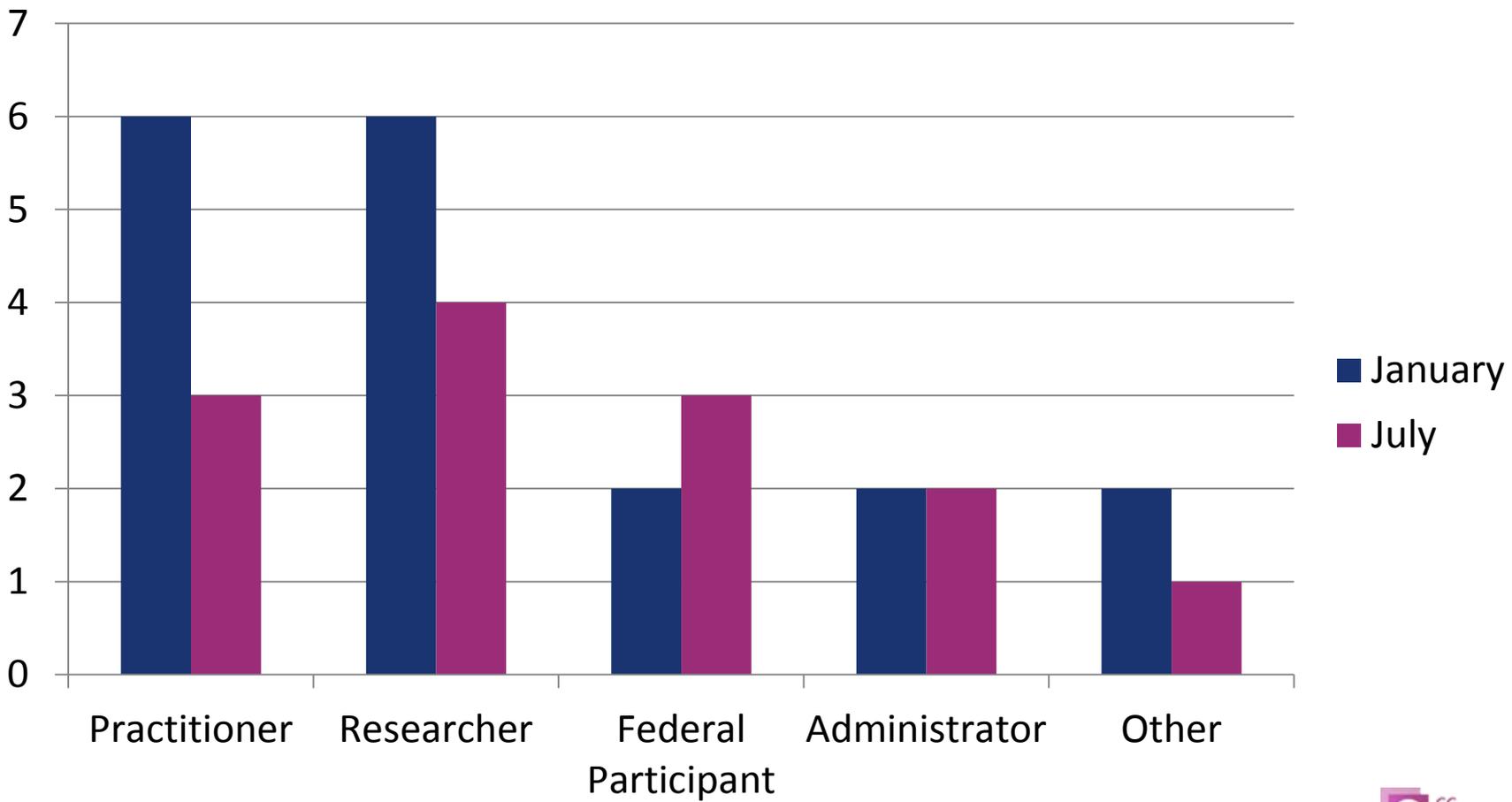
Third Annual Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Conference  
Ready, Set, Sustain: Continuing Our Success  
National Harbor, MD



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# Who Were the Experts



- January
  - The evidence: What works?
  - Discuss issues and challenges
  - Identifying priorities: How to fill the gaps?
- July
  - Promoting what works: Core components and best practices
  - Addressing issues and challenges: Innovation and performance management
  - Advancing priorities: Communication, dissemination and evaluation

- Experts identified the following core components of successful programs and practices:
  - Focusing efforts on reaching/engaging/retaining teens
  - Emphasizing education
  - Providing integrated services and referrals
  - Fostering strong participant-provider relationships
  - Holding well-defined program goals and processes
  - Incorporating family and developmental contexts
  - Maintaining highly skilled staff and welcoming program environments

- This presentation will provide concrete examples of each of these core components.
  - Select examples will be highlighted from Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) and Pregnancy Assistance Fund (PAF) grantee activities.

- Reaching pregnant and parenting teens
  - Develop partnerships with pediatricians
  - Visit hospital emergency rooms
  - Offer services through WIC programs
  - Work with criminal justice system
  - Go where teens congregate
  - Use social media
  - Develop partnerships with the faith-based community



Offer services at Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) programs-

The Oregon Department of Justice is implementing the Violence in Pregnancy and Parenting Intervention Project, by co-locating Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) advocates in multiple DHS child welfare and /or self-sufficiency centers statewide.

The goal of the project is to improve screening and referral to IPV services for pregnant and parenting women who are clients of social services and public health agencies.

-PAF grantee, Oregon

Go where teens congregate-

Holistic Education for the Advancement of Teens offers their program in the apartment complex where many of the participants live; this is convenient for participants and minimizes transportation issues.

-TPP Grantee, Georgia

Use social media-

Women Accepting Responsibility uses a Facebook page to stay connected to participants outside of sessions.

They use it to post reminders about sessions in school and to send messages like “We missed you today” if students were absent.

-TPP grantee, Maryland

Use social media-

South Jersey Healthcare-CCPHT uses a Shutterfly club page to send all parents a message at one time.

Parents and students also have the ability to share pictures on the Shutterfly page.

-TPP grantee, New Jersey

- Engaging expectant and parenting teens
  - Build relationships
  - Implement engaging activities
  - Model positive behavior
  - Conduct motivational interviewing
  - Encourage creativity
  - Engage program alumni
  - Empower current participants
  - Allow for flexibility
  - Allow for adaptability



## Build relationships-

“I think part of it is that the population likes to connect with adults in a meaningful way. Sometimes I have girls texting me saying, ‘Is it time to come in again?’”

- TPP Grantee, Minnesota

Implement engaging activities-

South Jersey Healthcare-CCPHT implemented something called “Fellowship” which takes place during the first few minutes of each session.

They give students a calendar that includes the activities taking place during Fellowship for the whole month. The grantee notes, “I’ve noticed that this has helped them to be excited about coming, and in interviews I’ve had with kids I see that it is working to retain them.”

-TPP Grantee, New Jersey

Engage program alumni-

Women Accepting Responsibility has created a Youth Advisory Board that helps to continue relationships with alumni and recruit future participants.

The grantee notes, “Facilitators meet monthly with YAB members in their school and they can earn service learning hours for their work--like if they make an announcement at a Meet and Greet, or post on Facebook about what they have learned, or speak at a community event about what they’ve learned.”

-TPP grantee, Maryland

Empower current participants-

Holistic Education for the Advancement of Teens rewards participants by giving them a leadership role in the community or in school. The grantee notes that if a student shows up on time they are eligible to have a leadership role in that day's session.

-TPP grantee, Georgia

Empower current participants-

At one grantee site, they incentivize kids for bringing new students to the program.

The grantee notes, that if we use their own peers to talk to them about how much they enjoy it, it works well at having them come back.

-TPP grantee

## Allow for flexibility-

At the Louisiana Public Health Institute, they moved their program to the summer in order to accommodate participants' transportation issues.

- TPP grantee, Louisiana

- Retaining expectant and parenting teens
  - Build relationships
  - Encourage staff to practice healthy behaviors
  - Reach out to community partners
  - Maintain a safe environment
  - Use technology
  - Offer incentives
  - Celebrate milestones
  - Involve teens



## Build relationships-

Program Reach, Inc. notes that they send cards home to celebrate birthdays, holidays, and honor role.

The grantee notes that, “A lot of the kids come in and give me a hug after getting their birthday card... The cards help let them know that we care even when we aren’t with them.”

-TPP grantee, New York

Reach out to community partners-

Louisiana Public Health Institute attributes their success in retention to partnering with an organization that had a preexisting positive relationship with kids in the community.

-TPP grantee, Louisiana

## Maintain a safe environment-

Program Reach, Inc. notes they provide transportation from school to the program and then home to minimize parents' safety concerns about students finding their way home alone.

-TPP grantee, New York

## Use technology-

People's Center Health Services notes they have found texting to be the most effective way to get a response from participants.

The grantee notes, "It is extremely effective, and I'd say I get the most response from texting over calling or emailing. I say 'Hi X, this is Stephanie from XX, It's already time for your next appointment and if you come you will get a gift card. Here are times I am available'" And I use a lot of exclamation points and respond by saying 'great, and cool!'"

-TPP grantee, Minnesota

## Use technology-

A grantee implementing TOP indicated that text messages were sent outside of school hours and before 9PM and message responses were reviewed during business hours. They sent texts related to the core curriculum, summer curriculum, event-based messages and ad-hoc messages.

-TPP Grantee, Colorado

## Offer incentives-

Iredell-Statesville Schools notes that they have had success allowing participants to use program hours toward their required school community service hours.

-TPP Grantee, North Carolina

## Offer incentives-

A grantee sends positive notes home to parents about their teen's success in the program. It was noted that if they send the note home, the student always finds out about it and then they will want to come back to the program.

-TPP Grantee

## Offer incentives-

People's Center Health Services provides new incentives at each session.

The grantee explains, “they come in for their session they get their first survey and they get a book called “S-E-X” by Heather Corinna and \$25 gift card. At first booster they get a Mary Kaye product—like a lip gloss- and a 10 dollar movie card. When they come in for their 3 month they get a 10 dollar Jimmy John and a sharpie, and at 6 months they get 10 dollars to Target.”

-TPP Grantee, Minnesota

## Offer incentives-

We use an incentive program that allows participants to earn free items for their children such as diapers, clothing, toys, equipment, and accessories.

-PAF grantee, District of Columbia

## Celebrate milestones-

At one grantee site, they have celebrations for kids who have perfect attendance and for those that only have missed 1-2 days. The grantee noted that the kids like to be competitive.

-TPP Grantee

Celebrate milestones-

At the Clayton County Board of Health, they recognize participant's accomplishments in a newsletter.

-TPP grantee, Georgia

## Involve teens-

At the Clayton County Board of Health, the grantee indicated that they have a “club coach” which is a participant that reaches out to students who have missed sessions before the facilitator does.

-TPP grantee, Georgia

- Education:
  - Holding students to higher expectations
  - Using an intergenerational approach
  - Modeling success
  - Working together
  - Providing support



## Holding students to higher expectations-

One grantee notes that their program targets traditional college-age students with very young children because they have the lowest retention rate in college compared to other student parent groups. The program also has a leadership requirement.

- PAF grantee, Minnesota

## Holding students to higher expectations-

One participant at the expert panel noted:  
creating a culture of high expectations makes a difference. For example, the Care Center in Holyoke, MA – humanities course offered for GED students.

- Expert Panelist

## Working together-

Washington State DOH engages the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI), ten local health jurisdictions, the Attorney General's Office (AGO), and Within Reach (a community-based organization) to take a comprehensive approach to address the needs of the community.

- PAF grantee, Washington State

## Working together-

The Virginia Office of Child and Family Health Services, housed within the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), contracts with eight institutions of higher education, spanning 22 sites/campuses, to provide services to student-parents.

- PAF grantee, Virginia

## Providing support-

- Case management and family support;
- Linkages and referrals to prenatal, reproductive, and pediatric health services
- Quality child care and transportation services,
- Parenting and life skills education and support services, including home visiting through a partnership with Nurturing Family Network programs.

- PAF grantee, Connecticut

## Providing support-

New Heights offers transportation assistance for eligible program participants by providing transportation tokens to/from school and/or a daily stipend.

- PAF grantee, District of Columbia

## Providing support-

- Student-parents are connected with resources and services that facilitate their ability to complete their schooling while balancing their paramount responsibilities as a parent
- They are linked with resources and provided with enrollment assistance for a myriad of health, social, and educational programs and services
- Program strives to meet immediate or emergency needs of student-parents by providing access to ‘baby pantries’ that stock typical baby care products and gas cards or transportation passes to get to and from school.
- Some sites provide free professional and ongoing counseling services and emergency stipends that may assist in covering housing, food or childcare assistance.”

-PAF grantee, Virginia

- Integrated services and referrals
  - Supporting teen parents' use of referrals
  - Using technology
  - Addressing mental health
  - Making it worthwhile
  - Co-funding initiatives



## Supporting teen parents' use of referrals-

New Heights offers supportive case management and assistance with accessing community resources such as a childcare voucher, the Women, Infants, and Children program (WIC), housing, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), employment, job training opportunities, college/university admissions and more.

-PAF grantee, District of Columbia

## Using technology-

- WithinReach developed a new teen-focused website, [WashingTeenHelp.org](http://WashingTeenHelp.org), and public awareness campaign.
- Website was developed with input directly from teens and providers.
- Website links to the resources identified through each of the ten targeted local health jurisdictions.
- State Maternal and Child Health hotline is connected to the site. Call centers communicate via text messaging to answer questions and link youth to needed resources.

-PAF grantee, Washington  
State

## Addressing mental health-

The Las Cruces High School GRADS team realized teen parents need additional emotional and mental support.

If teens are not healthy emotionally and mentally, they cannot provide that same support for their children.

The Child Development Center Director is participating in training to become endorsed in the area of Infant Mental Health to conduct conferences in a way that allows the teen parents to identify strengths and problem solve challenges.

-PAF grantee, New Mexico

- Strong participant-provider relationships
  - Staff retention
  - Training on best practices
  - Transparency and consistency
  - Use what you learn



## Staff retention-

O'Pray Hennepin County notes that they bring all their health educators together (usually dispersed among many clinics, and often each of them is alone) once a month to update them and provide them with training.

The grantee notes, "I think this helps, because it helps make them not feel so alone."

-TPP Grantee, Minnesota

## Training on best practices-

Coordinators provide resources for other school staff members about how to best serve expectant and parenting students.

-PAF grantee, District of Columbia

## Training on best practices-

All funded communities receive intensive technical assistance from Arkansas STARS, which is a partnership of two statewide non-profit organizations that both have extensive experience providing services and support to pregnant and parenting teens.

-PAF grantee, Arkansas

Use what you learn-

New Heights conducted two participant focus groups, one male and one female.

Purpose - measure overall satisfaction with the program, optimum ways of promoting the program, most effective services, components that should be added, and impact of the program on participants' lives.

-PAF grantee, District of Columbia

Use what you learn-

The Virginia grantee developed and launched a quarterly student-parent program satisfaction survey.

-PAF grantee, Virginia

- Well-defined program goals and processes
  - Creating a common understanding
  - Sharing a framework
  - Monitoring staff
  - Being realistic
  - Continuous improvement
  - Planning for sustainability
  - Articulating goals
  - Recognizing failure



## Creating a common understanding-

The Indiana MCH reviewed several research documents that explore evidence-based programs and the characteristics that are effective for the expectant and parenting teen population.

Sub-grantees select specific evidence-based program models from that review and ensure those core elements are in place.

-PAF grantee, Indiana

Continuing to improve-

Evaluation will include surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews with supervisors, case managers, and pregnant and parenting teens.

The goal is to synthesize the formative feedback from local partners to refine the case management tool and ultimately to develop a standardized intervention based on a full pilot evaluation for AFLP case management in California.

-PAF grantee, California

## Planning for sustainability-

The program has also built several key partnerships and community connections. For example, solicitation of local funding through the partner colleges and universities to support program sustainability.

-PAF grantee, Virginia

- Family relationships
  - Changing perspective
  - Establishing healthy relationships
  - Involving dads
  - Being flexible



## Involving dads-

The Connecticut program, and several others, offer young fathers involvement services and supports.

-PAF grantee, Connecticut

- Developmental influences
  - Using an ecological model
  - Applying a holistic approach
  - Incorporating diversity
  - Tailoring messages
  - Recognizing triggers



Using an ecological model-

In tribal communities in Michigan, pregnancy and children are traditionally regarded as sacred, and critical to each tribe's future and identity.

Intergenerational effects of historical oppression, violence, and neglect have impacted health-seeking and help-seeking behaviors.

American Indian teens who find themselves facing pregnancy and parenthood face additional challenges due to their young age, lack of experience and lack of preparation to support a family economically.

- PAF grantee, Michigan

Using an ecological model-

Most of the participants in the Learning Together Program enter with multiple challenges. Most were raised in chaotic homes, growing up surrounded by poverty, violence, neglect, physical and sexual abuse.

Many participants carry mistrust and lack of confidence in both themselves and in those institutions designed to support them.

They struggle to become self-supporting, contributing workers, citizens, and parents because they lack the most basic information and skills they need to meet the multiple demands they face in the world.

-PAF grantee, Vermont

## Incorporating diversity-

Among the Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomi people, Tribal communities in Michigan, collectively known as the *People of the Three Fires*, the project is entitled ‘Support Network for Anishinaabe (pronounced a-nish-in-aah-bay) Pregnant and Parenting Teens’.

‘Anishinaabe’ is the term that the people of the three fires use to refer to themselves.”

-PAF grantee, Michigan

## Incorporating diversity-

The Department of Public Health and Human Services is conducting a needs assessment to identify gaps in services specifically for Native American teen parents in the state.

-PAF grantee, Montana

## Incorporating diversity-

The Choctaw Nation will implement evidence-based and culturally appropriate curricula and materials using Parents as Teachers (PAT), Positive Indian Parenting (PIP), and InJoy (specific education on prenatal, delivery, and post-partum phases).

These materials have been used in the past to enhance parenting skills for this population.

-PAF grantee, Oklahoma

## Tailoring messages-

“Our population are people coming from trauma and system involved. We are very clear about language – not what we do for them but help them do for themselves.”

-Expert panelist

## Recognizing triggers-

Many challenges occurred in the students' lives, each with the potential to derail the journey toward a degree.

The barriers were addressed through regular, intentional contact using available resources on and off campus to help bring stability to the situation.

Regular contact encouraged the students to work on problems more proactively, which resulted in a more successful resolution.

-PAF grantee, Minnesota

- Highly skilled staff and welcoming program environments
  - Training staff
  - Valuing recruitment
  - Hiring selectively
  - Holding staff accountable
  - Maintaining staff morale



## Training staff-

Provided increased teacher training and support to the GRADS programs.

The trainings helped with confidence and provided tools to the new teachers and ensured continuous, skilled support for the expectant and parenting students.

-PAF grantee, Washington

## Training staff-

Grantee staff received a series of trainings on: core competencies for providers of adolescent sexual and reproductive health (for supervisors); positive youth development; case management and motivational interviewing; and life planning.

-PAF grantee, California

## Maintaining staff morale-

“Getting together and talking about their challenges and strategizing among themselves—like what they do about recruitment--- has been helpful in keeping morale up in the centers. I think it reenergizes them.”

-TPP grantee, California

- In sum, core components of successful programs serving expectant and parenting teens include:
  - Emphasizing education
  - Integrating services and referrals
  - Establishing strong participant-provider relationships
  - Articulating well-defined program goals and processes
  - Strengthening family relationships
  - Giving consideration to developmental factors
  - Recruiting, training, and retaining highly skilled staff
  - Providing welcoming program environments

- The experts also agreed that there is a need to:
  - Re-frame and de-stigmatize the discourse surrounding expectant and parenting teens.
  - Engage the teens themselves in the conversation.
  - Emphasize positive possibilities, as opposed to focusing on preventing “problems.”
  - Build/strengthen relationships between researchers and providers, providers and teens, teens and families.
  - Include a critical and ongoing review of the field, including training, outcomes, theory, and evaluation.

- Where do we go from here?
  - These core components mark important considerations for stakeholders
    - Providers, researchers, and policy makers should integrate these concrete strategies into their work and practice.
  - Future program and evaluation efforts should implement, assess, and build upon to these strategies in order to further the field of serving expectant and parenting teens.

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# BEYOND “16 AND PREGNANT”

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## EXPECTING SUCCESS FROM PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS

Third Annual Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grantee Conference  
Ready, Set, Sustain: Continuing Our Success  
May 20-22, 2013, National Harbor, MD

Lara S. Kaufmann, Senior Counsel & Director of Education Policy  
for At-Risk Students  
National Women's Law Center

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# Pregnant and Parenting Students in Secondary Schools

- Girls & the Dropout Crisis
- Teen Pregnancy/Parenting and Educational Outcomes
- Barriers to Success
- Title IX
- State Laws
- Recommendations

# Girls and the Dropout Crisis

- Over 25% of girls in the U.S. do not graduate from high school in four years – if at all.
- Rates are worse for girls of color:
  - Native American/Alaskan Native: 44%
  - Latina: 34%
  - African American: 35%
  - Compare to: White girls: 20%; All girls: 24%; All boys: 30%

Source: EPE Research Center, Diplomas Count 2010, Education Week, June 2012.

# When Girls Don't Graduate, We All Fail

- Girls who do not graduate from high school are more likely to be unemployed and make significantly lower wages than male dropouts.
- 1 out of every 2 female high school dropouts is unemployed.
- In 2006, 77% of adult male dropouts were employed, compared to only 53% of their female peers.

# Teen Pregnancy in the U.S.

- Higher than any other industrialized country.
- Overall, nearly 3 in 10 girls will become pregnant at least once by age 20.
- The rates are higher for women of color; more than 50% of Latina and Black young women become pregnant before age 20.

# Pregnancy and Parenting: Effect on Educational Attainment

- Gates Foundation survey: nearly 1/3 of female dropouts said becoming a parent was a *major* factor in their decisions to leave school; total of 1/2 identified it as a factor; was a factor for boys too.
- Child Trends study: 51% of women who were teen mothers do not get high school diploma by age 22; one in three teenage mothers get neither diploma nor GED by age 22.
- National Campaign to Prevent Teen & Unplanned Pregnancy: Only 2% of young teen mothers (give birth by age 18) get college degree by age 30.

# Breaking Down Stereotypes: Pregnancy as a Motivator

- Study of young mothers revealed that “regardless of their school status, almost all teens described the emergence of new priorities and concerns for their future as they anticipated motherhood.”
- Unfortunately, this drive and determination “was often complicated, and sometimes thwarted, by competing work demands, family and child care responsibilities, and educational barriers.”
- Young parents who drop out say would have worked harder if their schools had demanded more of them and provided the necessary support.

Sources: Lee SmithBattle,- *"I Wanna Have a Good Future": Teen Mothers' Rise in Educational Aspirations, Competing Demands, and Limited School Support*. Youth & Society (March 2007); Gates Foundation Survey 2005 (last bullet).

# Barriers to Graduation for PPS

- Environment of Discouragement
- Punitive Absence Policies
- The Unequal Alternative
- Inaccessible Homebound Services
- Lack of Childcare & Transportation
- Dearth of Data

# Environment of Discouragement

- Shift in way treated by peers, teachers, and school administrators when pregnancy discovered.
- School officials give up on them and talk about them in diminished terms.
- Lack of guidance, support, encouragement
- Stereotypes internalized, affects engagement in school
- Sexual harassment

# Other Discriminatory Barriers

## Punitive Absence Policies

- Most states lack clear policy on excused absences for PPS.
  - Exceptions: CA, FL, OR, NC, ME, and AZ.
- Doctor's appointments, bed rest, childbirth and recovery, children's illnesses.

## Unequal Alternatives

- PPS pushed into attending alternative programs.
- Some programs are inferior, dead-ends

# Example of Unequal Alternative: NYC's "P schools"

Until 2007, **NYC** operated separate schools specifically for pregnant and parenting young women.

- Average daily attendance was only 47%.
- Less than half of the students transitioned back into mainstream high schools
- NYT reporter visited a "P school" in 2007 found a dozen girls perched at their desks:

**No pencils, no textbooks, no Pythagorean theorem. Instead, they sewed a quilt...That is what passes for math in one of New York City's four high schools for pregnant girls, this one in Harlem. "It ties into geometry," said Patricia Martin, the principal. "They're cutting shapes."**

# Homebound Instruction

- Most pregnant and parenting students simply will not be able to attend school for some period of time before or after giving birth.
- Some states offer homebound, hospital, or online learning to students who are temporarily disabled, but do not offer it to P/P students, which violates the law.
- Only one state, North Carolina, statutorily requires schools to offer homebound and online learning to students whose children have temporary illnesses or who are unable to attend school because they do not have access to childcare.

# Childcare and Transportation

- Young women need quality, affordable child care to succeed in school.
- The average fee for full-time care ranges from \$3,600 to \$18,200 annually, depending on where the family lives, the type of care, and the age of the child.
- Under many state laws, it is illegal for a child under the age of 5 to ride on a school bus. So many students have no way to transport their child to and from school.

# Lack of Data

- No nationwide data collection that tracks the number of pregnant and parenting students enrolled in secondary schools and their educational outcomes.
- In 2009 only eleven states were collecting information about student pregnancy (if that).
- Until data on P/P students is available, including data on educational outcomes, it is difficult to make data-driven decisions to invest resources in what we know works.
- School districts want these data for planning purposes!

# PPS Have Civil Rights to Equal Educational Opportunities

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 says:**

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

# What does Title IX do?

- Basic non-discrimination principle
- Sex discrimination includes pregnancy discrimination
- Requirements specific to schools' treatment of pregnant and parenting students.
- Prohibits retaliation for complaining about a potential violation

# Does Title IX apply?

- What Institutions are covered? Follow the federal funding.
- Applies to *all* aspects of education programs, not just athletics!
- Enforced primarily by Dept. of Ed.'s Office for Civil Rights (OCR): investigate complaints, conduct compliance reviews, issue guidance and regulations.
- Schools must take steps to prevent and address sex discrimination, including harassment; adopt anti-harassment policies and grievance procedures.
- Schools also must appoint Title IX Coordinator and notify school community.

# Title IX Regulations on Pregnancy

- Equal access to school and activities.
- Doctor's note for continued participation can be requested only if done for all students with conditions requiring medical care.
- Special programs or schools must be voluntary.
- Absences must be excused for as long as student's doctor deems medically necessary.
- Students must be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.
- Services for temporarily disabled must be offered to pregnant students too

# Examples of Title IX Violations

- In recent news:
  - ACLU case in New Mexico.
  - Delhi, Louisiana case.
- Refusing to excuse absences due to pregnancy/childbirth or let students make up work missed.
- Forbidding pregnant student from walking at graduation.
- Threatening young woman who no longer fit into school uniform with detention if she did not keep shirt tucked in and belt buckled around her swollen stomach.
- Excluding eligible students who are or have been pregnant from induction into school's National Honor Society chapter.

# Title IX is a Floor

- Beyond non-discrimination, there is a lot more that schools and communities can and should do to support this vulnerable population of students

# What works for Pregnant and Parenting Teens?

- Core components of successful programs serving PPT, from 2012 OAH expert panel workgroup:  
[http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/info/Assets/paf\\_expert\\_panel\\_rpt\\_2012.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-publications/info/Assets/paf_expert_panel_rpt_2012.pdf)
  - Emphasize education – incl. financial literacy and post-secondary – in conjunction with provision of services
  - Integrate services and referrals to fully meet teens' needs
  - Establish strong participant-provider relationships
  - Articulate well-defined program goals and processes
  - Strengthen family relationships
  - Consider developmental/contextual factors, use holistic approach and recognize triggers
  - Recruit, train & retain highly skilled staff
  - Provide welcoming program environments

# Focus on what works:

## Promote Completion of Education

- Hold students to higher expectations, provide rich opportunities
- HS diploma should not be end goal; emphasize importance of post-secondary options
- Intergenerational support/involvement can be helpful
- Connect with students with role models (current or former students who are successful)
- School districts can work collaboratively with higher education leaders to prioritize needs of PPT
- Provide wrap-around services, such as child care and housing

# NWLC Report – June 2012

## *A Pregnancy Test for Schools: The Impact of Education Laws on Pregnant and Parenting Students*

- NWLC examined state education laws and policies for all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and D.C.
- Identified promising state policies/programs, state laws that might be harmful to the educational success of PPS, and states that are doing nothing.
- Ranks states
- Recommendations and Toolkit
- [www.nwlc.org/pregnancytestforschools](http://www.nwlc.org/pregnancytestforschools)

# Promising State Laws & Programs

- CA, PA, FL, and others trying to create statewide, evidence-based programs and curricula that show great potential to improve educational outcomes for PPS.
  - Due to pressure from advocates, two largest school districts (NYC and LAUSD) changed their policies and practices regarding PPS.
- BUT: many of these programs have suffered since the recession began in 2007 (e.g. CA & PA)
- Puerto Rico Pregnant and Parenting Students' Bill of Rights
- Wisconsin law re: accommodating the needs of PPS

# State Laws & Programs: The Big Picture

- Overall, no state has the full range of major policies and programs in place that would help get pregnant and parenting students on track to graduate college and career ready.
- Fewer than half of the states explicitly make homebound or hospitalized instruction services available to pregnant and parenting students.
- 46% of states have no statewide program, grant, or support designed specifically for pregnant and parenting students.

# Policy ≠ Practice

- Mere existence of a good policy and high ranking says nothing about implementation.
- Laws and policies intended to meet the needs of PPS only meaningful if fully implemented on a broad scale and those responsible for effectuating them are properly educated and trained.
- Just because law says pregnant student is entitled to flexible scheduling does not mean every pregnant student will receive it.
- Despite Title IX's clear prohibition, students continue to be pushed into alternative programs against their will and denied homebound services.

# Promising Program at Local Level

- PEP program at West Oso HS in Corpus Christi, Texas
- Within mainstream school, not at separate site
- Child care and transportation provided
- Referrals to health care and other services
- Counseling and encouragement, positive climate
- Parenting and life skills classes
- Higher graduation rates
- Lower teen pregnancy rates
- For more information:

<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/sites/default/files/newsletter-v23n3-2013.pdf>

# Another Promising Local Program

- “Expectant and Parenting Student Liaison” in Chelsea High School, Massachusetts
- Started in 2011-2012 school year; cohort of 59 students (49 mothers, 10 fathers)
- Academic guide, case manager, coach, advocate
- \$25,000/year, 20 hours a week (incl. summers)
- Helps facilitate access to services, navigating systems
- High expectations, changing culture at school
- Better retention & lower rate of repeat teen births

<http://www.massteenpregnancy.org/sites/default/files/policy/matpchelsea-report12pgv9.pdf>

# Recommendations: Federal Government

- Department of Education's OCR should shine a spotlight on the rights of pregnant and parenting students via guidance, technical assistance, training.
- OCR also should enhance enforcement efforts in this area and conduct compliance reviews.
- Congress should provide support for targeted programs for pregnant and parenting students.

# Recommendations: States

- Policy review and coordination:
  - Create statewide definition of excused absences that includes all pregnancy and parenting-related absences.
  - Pass specific education laws and regulations to protect pregnant and parenting students.
  - Establish standards for pregnant and parenting student programs and require school districts to offer these programs.
- Professional development
- Funding for educational and related services

# Recommendations: Schools and Districts

- Change the School or District Policy
- School Climate for PPS
- Designate and Train Title IX Coordinators
- Create Resources
- Educate and Advertise

# Recommendations: Service Providers and Advocates

- Find school's written policies
- Find school/district Title IX Coordinator(s)
- Toolkit at [www.nwlc.org/pregnancytestforschools](http://www.nwlc.org/pregnancytestforschools)
- More fact sheets available at:  
[www.nwlc.org/pregnantandparentingstudents](http://www.nwlc.org/pregnantandparentingstudents)
- Call us for help, or send an email to [info@nwlc.org](mailto:info@nwlc.org).

# QUESTIONS?

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