

# MOAPPP Monitor

www.moappp.org

Winter 2005

The mission of MOAPPP is to strengthen policies and programs related to adolescent pregnancy, prevention and parenting in Minnesota.

## “Teen Pregnancy Prevention – More Than Just Sex Ed: Making the Link to Youth Development”

Adapted and reprinted with permission from ETR Associates' Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (ReCAPP), Lezin, N., *Youth Development and Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention*. Scotts Valley, CA: ETR Associates, 2004.

Youth development approaches are a natural enhancement of adolescent pregnancy prevention programs. First, as anyone who works with adolescents knows, it is relatively rare for young people to engage in one risky behavior and not others. A youth development approach that tries to motivate young people to think of their own future, their self worth, and their potential can affect a range of behaviors, not just one type of risk.

Many adolescent pregnancy prevention programs emphasize education about sex and about obtaining and using contraception. These types of programs can be effective in reducing sexual risk-taking behavior. However, a growing body of research suggests that even when these programs work, their effects are relatively modest. As Douglas Kirby of ETR Associates has noted:

“...Youth may have the knowledge, skills, and ability to get and use contraceptives, but if those youth are not connected to family and school and do not believe that their future is promising and worth protecting, then they may not be highly motivated to avoid teen pregnancy; and if they are not highly motivated to avoid pregnancy, they are not likely to take the

steps needed to use contraception consistently. Thus, motivation and other non-sexual antecedents must be addressed.”<sup>1</sup>

In addition to contributing to reducing adolescent pregnancy itself, youth development approaches have another very appealing feature:



“Regardless of one’s views on teenage sexuality and access to contraception, everyone tends to agree that supporting young people in positive ways – through adult and community connections, praise, encouragement, and celebration of young people’s achievements – is good for young people and for the community as a whole.”

they can draw consensus and unified community support, instead of the antagonism and controversy that some adolescent pregnancy programs struggle with on a day-to-day basis. Regardless of one’s views on teenage sexuality and access to contraception, everyone tends to agree that supporting young people in positive ways – through adult and community connections, praise, encouragement, and celebration of young people’s achievements – is good for young people and for the community as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

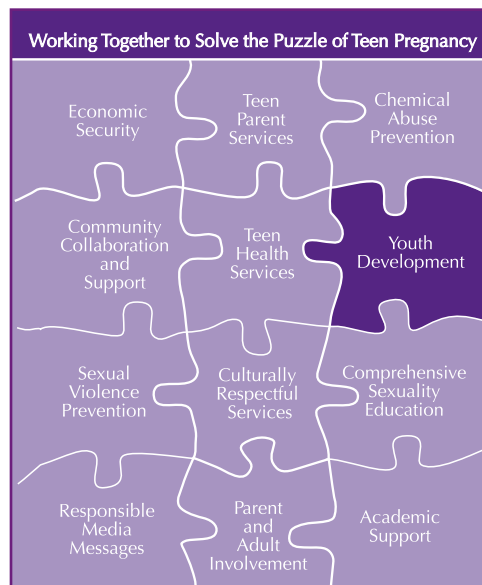
Finally, many youth development programs have been in place for years and have well-developed activities and networks within communities. This means that in many communities, adolescent pregnancy programs can tap into an existing set of resources that is already well-organized and ready to contribute.<sup>3</sup>

Youth development programs are about building assets for young people that will both protect and motivate them as they achieve the outcomes of a safe, healthy adolescence and a mature, satisfying adulthood. For this reason, a youth development approach is a best bet for promoting teen sexual health and preventing early pregnancies. •

<sup>1</sup> Kirby, D. Foreword in: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. Start Early, Stay Late: Linking Youth Development and Teen Pregnancy Prevention. Op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Kirby, D. and Coyle, K. 1997. Youth Development Programs. Children and Youth Services Review. Vol. 19, Nos. 5/6, pp. 437-454.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



MOAPPP’s Teen Pregnancy Puzzle illustrates the complexity of the issue and the need for comprehensive solutions based on research.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

# Dear Friends,



Welcome to another edition of the **MOAPPP Monitor**. I hope this winter season finds you surrounded by warmth and light. At MOAPPP, we have renewed our resolution to bring focus to the teen pregnancy dialogue across the state. We recognize that a brand new group of young people will become teenagers this year, and that their parents, schools and communities want them to reach adulthood healthy and whole. MOAPPP will continue to be a trusted resource for this journey.

Our focus this month is on youth development – an essential piece of the MOAPPP Teen Pregnancy Puzzle. MOAPPP's puzzle image is used to illustrate the complexity of teen pregnancy, and to stress that a one-size-fits-all approach to the issue will have limited success. There are many elements in young peoples' lives that can lead to teen pregnancy. And, there are many elements that can prevent it. Youth development is one of the most compelling prevention strategies that we know.

But what exactly is "youth development"? Is it a specific kind of program? Or a way of working with young people? Is it the milestones young people reach in their journey toward adulthood? The articles in this issue of the **Monitor** will help clarify answers to these questions.

We welcome contributions from Nicole Lezin from ETR Associates' Resource Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (ReCAPP) and Lynn Bretl from the Healthy Youth Development Prevention Resource Center at the University of Minnesota. These authors highlight the strength of youth development approaches in preventing teen pregnancy, and lay out a policy rationale for their support.

Other articles in this issue – one from Laurie Meschke of Good Reason Consulting and another from Sergio Romero of La Oportunidad, Inc. – illuminate the needs of specific groups of young people – teen parents and young men.

We hope this edition of the **Monitor** increases your understanding of youth development. Thank you for your continued support of our work.

My best to you,

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### MOAPPP Monitor

Winter 2005

*Graphic Design:*

Columns

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The Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting, a non-profit organization, is composed of individuals and organizations in Minnesota that work to strengthen policies and programs related to adolescent pregnancy, prevention and parenting in Minnesota.

# Helping Youth Development Fit Into the Policy Puzzle

Lynn Bretl, MPP, Public Policy Coordinator,  
Healthy Youth Development Prevention Research Center,  
University of Minnesota

The “youth development” piece in MOAPPP’s Teen Pregnancy Puzzle can be one of the most challenging pieces to address. What in the world do we mean when we refer to a “youth development” program? How can we know if and when we are “doing youth development?”

At the Healthy Youth Development Prevention Research Center (PRC), we define youth development as the processes through which teens gain the skills to lead healthy lives and develop into competent, contributing members of their communities. Youth development programs do more than simply teach teens how to avoid risky behaviors. They provide youth the opportunity to connect with caring and concerned adults and make meaningful contributions to their families and communities.

Youth development, however, is much more than just a program. It is a strategy; a mindset; a way of envisioning youth and their potential. A program grounded in a youth development framework is one that sees youth as resources to be developed, not just problems to be solved. Teens are, as a group, physically healthy. Adopting a youth development approach when working with adolescents capitalizes on this state of health, as opposed to waiting only until they fall into unhealthy situations before we intervene.

During these times of financial strain for the state, government is looking for ways to tighten the belt, not expand it. Youth development is often seen as a non-essential that we can ill afford, particularly when there is so much concern with reading and math scores. Providing youth development programming and improving academic performance, however, are not competing goals.

The beauty of a youth development approach to providing supports for teens is that it addresses a multitude of risk factors among diverse populations of adolescents. If we invest in youth development as an overarching strategy, we do not have to decide which problems to address and which to leave for the next budget cycle.

As a state, we have yet to collectively define one vision for our youth in Minnesota. Without that vision, we struggle to address the multitude of issues facing our state’s youth in a comprehensive and efficient manner. Creating policies under the framework of youth development establishes a culture that fosters healthy youth. •

## RECOMMENDED STATE POLICIES

### CIVIC PARTICIPATION/SERVICE LEARNING

Encouraging and preparing young people for active civic participation holds promise for moving youth toward productive, positive roles in their communities. To encourage civic participation by youth, states can support authorizing school credit toward graduation requirements and funding support for school-based service learning programs.

### YOUTH PROGRAMMING

Out of school and after school programs for youth form the basis for a system of services and resources to support positive youth development. State law can focus on both the content and the quality of the programs that it funds and administers. Youth programming policies should:

- Recognize that programs, including after-school, out-of-school, and mentoring programs, have been shown to meet the developmental needs of young people.
- Recognize that community programs, including those sponsored by businesses, service organizations and government, provide important opportunities for youth to develop personal and social assets.

### COORDINATION OF YOUTH-RELATED PROGRAMS AND FUNDING

State governments can maximize investments in young people by ensuring the effective coordination of youth-serving agencies and funding streams. State policy can establish a statewide governance structure to ensure coordination of multiple state agency budgets and federal grant programs affecting youth, influence relevant state agencies and track performance in achieving positive outcomes for youth.

Adapted from Policy Matters: Setting and Measuring Benchmarks for State Policies, Engaging Youth in Positive and Productive Roles: Recommendations for State Policy. Center for the Study of Social Policy, February 2003. Available at: [www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/engaging\\_youth.pdf](http://www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/engaging_youth.pdf)

## OUTREACH

## 14TH ANNUAL MOAPPP CONFERENCE

THE LIVES OF OUR TEENS

a look from the **inside** **out**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

Join us for two days of dynamic speakers, challenging workshops and plenty of opportunities to network with Minnesota professionals committed to teen pregnancy prevention and support for pregnant and parenting teens.

**KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:**

**David Walsh**, President and Founder of the National Institute on Media and the Family, "Why Do They Act That Way? The Teen Brain and Sexual Health."

**Melissa Havard**, Director, The Media Project, Advocates for Youth, "Entertainment: A Powerful Tool for Social Change."

**Ivan Juzang**, President, MEE (Motivational Educational Entertainment) Productions, Inc., "This is My Reality - Teens' Views of Sexuality."

**MAY 5-6, 2005****EARLE BROWN HERITAGE CENTER  
BROOKLYN CENTER, MINNESOTA**

*A photographic exhibition*  
**GIRL CULTURE**  
*by Lauren Greenfield*



The Junior League of Minneapolis and the Minnesota Center for Photography have partnered to bring the photographic exhibition ***Girl Culture*** by **Lauren Greenfield** to Minneapolis **January 15, 2005 – March 27, 2005**. Greenfield's exhibit of 58 edgy photos complemented by self-narratives provide a look into the secret world of girls' social lives and private rituals and comment on how girls are affected and influenced by American pop culture.

Lauren Greenfield is an internationally acclaimed photographer whose work is regularly published in *The New York Times Magazine*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Vanity Fair*. Her work is featured in the collections of numerous museums around the world. Greenfield recently won "Photographer of the Year" at the Lucie Awards in New York City.

Ms. Greenfield will appear at the Ted Mann Concert Hall, University of Minnesota, 2128 4th Street South (West Bank) for a book signing and lecture on February 24, 7 p.m. Her appearance is sponsored by Canon USA and MOAPPP.

The exhibition runs **January 15 through March 27, 2005** at the Minnesota Center for Photography, 165 - 13th Avenue N.E., Minneapolis, MN 55413. [www.mncp.org](http://www.mncp.org); 612-824-5500.

Teaching strategies and resources are available at [www.girlculture.com](http://www.girlculture.com) to engage youth in discussion around issues raised by the photographs in the exhibit.

The exhibit is endorsed by The Anna Westin Foundation, Girl Scout Council of Great Minneapolis, Girl Scout Council of St. Croix Valley, National Council of Jewish Women – Greater Minneapolis Section, Search Institute, University of Minnesota-School of Public Health and YWCA of Minneapolis.

## “Male Involvement in Teen Pregnancy Prevention”

Sergio Romero, Latino Youth Program Coordinator  
Jóvenes Unidos (Youth United), La Oportunidad, Inc.

### Why Is It Important?

The inclusion of males in teen pregnancy prevention is a relatively new phenomenon. Until recently, males were not included in efforts to curtail the problem of teen pregnancy, primarily because teen girls were seen to have more at stake. Despite this, research reveals that it is males who more often initiate sexual encounters and accumulate more sexual partners.<sup>1</sup> The necessity to include males in teen pregnancy prevention must therefore be at the forefront of teen pregnancy prevention initiatives.

### What Works?

Much evidence exists that outlines the following principles needed for male teen pregnancy programs to be effective.<sup>2</sup> Among these principles:

**1. Focus on males throughout program development and implementation.** Because boys and girls respond differently to teen pregnancy prevention messages and approaches, it is important for programs to be male-centered instead of merely adding components to a dual-gender program. A particularly effective strategy has been to clearly define the definition of manhood, differentiating manhood from simply being male.

**2. Outreach.** Though many teen pregnancy prevention programs target school-aged youth, a plethora of young males either do not

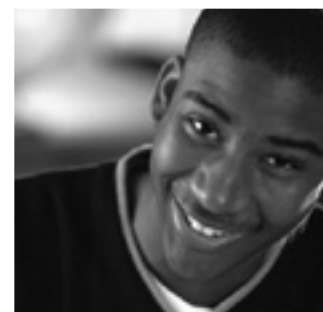
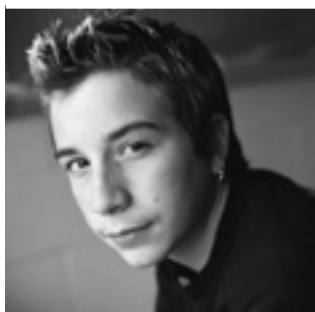
attend school or have already completed their K-12 education. Given that many young adult men are often the sexual partners of teen girls, and that

male school dropouts are at high risk of engaging in unprotected sex, male teen prevention efforts need an aggressive outreach strategy outside of school-based programs.

**3. Utilize male mentors and role models.** Young men and teen boys from high-risk communities have been found to lack positive relationships with their fathers and other positive and responsible males. It is therefore crucial for teen pregnancy prevention programs to utilize male staff in their programming to arrive at effective outcomes.

### PRINCIPLES FOR MALE TEEN PREGNANCY PROGRAMS:

1. Focus on males throughout program development and implementation
2. Outreach
3. Utilize male mentors and role models
4. Incorporate participants' culture



**4. Incorporate participants' culture.** Strong evidence supports the notion that culturally specific efforts are especially effective. As empirical evidence demonstrates, it is particularly important for teen pregnancy prevention programs to match the values, beliefs and ways of life of specific ethnic groups and to understand environmental context.

### What Needs to be Done?

Beyond the inclusion of males in teen pregnancy prevention, it is imperative that an initiative for male youth development and empowerment is created. Though committees comprised of female role models and leaders support and empower young females, there continues to be a lack of such an amalgamation of men designed specifically for young males. One goal is thus to create a collection of male community leaders and figures that can together develop a vision and plan that will empower male youth toward engaging in positive, pro-social behavior.<sup>3</sup> It is visions such as these that can together work to strengthen young men's pride, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, and thereby reduce their involvement in teen pregnancy. •

<sup>1</sup> Watson, F.I., & Kelly, M.J. (1989). Targeting the at-risk male: A strategy for adolescent pregnancy prevention. *Journal of the National Medical Association*, 81, 453-456.

<sup>2</sup> Moore, K.A., Driscoll, A.K., & Ooms, T. (1997). *Not just for girls: The roles of boys and men in teen pregnancy prevention*. Washington, D.C.: National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy.

<sup>3</sup> Sonenstein, F.L., Stewart, K., Duberstein, L., Lindberg-Duberstein, L., Pernas, M., & Williams, D. (1997). *Involving Males in Preventing Teen Pregnancy. A Guide for Program Planners*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.



“It is imperative that an initiative for male youth development and empowerment is created.”



## “Promoting Youth Development for Adolescent Parents”

Laurie L. Meschke, PhD  
Good Reason Consulting, Inc.

Youth development is a prevention approach that promotes core healthy adolescent developmental processes, opportunities, and experiences to enhance the health and well-being of adolescents and their transition to adulthood<sup>1</sup>. The National Council on Health and the Institute of Medicine have recommended that eight specific features be incorporated into programs or settings that foster youth development. These features include: (1) physical and psychological safety, (2) appropriate structure, (3) supportive relationships, (4) opportunities to belong, (5) positive social norms, (6) support for efficacy and mattering, (7) opportunities for skill building, and (8) integration of family, school, and community efforts<sup>2</sup>. Youth development applies to all adolescents, yet its application is often overlooked in relation to program efforts with teen parents. The following considers the importance of two recommended youth development features as applied to teen mothers and fathers.

**Physical and psychological safety.** This feature is considered a critical basic foundation to all youth development programs. Youth who are victims or witnesses of violence can suffer long-term consequences including post-traumatic stress or aggression<sup>3</sup>. Adolescent parents are more likely to have been physically and/or sexually abused than their non-parenting counterparts. Given the greater vulnerability of young parents to violence, youth workers should carefully monitor language and gestures that could be interpreted as threatening. Enhanced training in the area of youth safety and violence screening is encouraged for adults working with adolescent parents. Programs for adolescent parents should occur in the healthiest settings possible. Adults in authority should model and practice health promotion behaviors. These behaviors can be as simple as hand washing and the disinfection of public areas — promoting the health of both teens and their children.

**Appropriate structure.** Adolescent parents face both the developmental tasks of adolescence and parenthood. Program facilitators need to strike a fine balance between adolescent parents' opportunities to be teens and their role as parents. Childbearing is contingent primarily on biological development. Adolescence also involves great change in psychosocial outcomes. In general research suggests that by the age of 16 most individuals have the ability to engage in hypothetical thinking, make logical decisions, extend thinking into the future and take on the perspective of others. These are critical cognitive skills for effective parenting. The issue of psychosocial development should be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis regarding expectations and appropriate consequences if expectations are not met.



“Let us not forget that these young parents are still adolescents with much of their lives of hope ahead of them.”

All youth appreciate structured programs over chaotic programs but adolescent parents are likely to have an even greater need for such structure. Many adolescent parents live with a high degree of stress and chaos, such as overcrowding. For example, interviews with 44 adolescent mothers by Lao Family revealed that although a third of the young mothers lived with five or fewer persons, another third resided with ten or more persons. One in five of the teen mothers had two or more children<sup>4</sup>. Youth development programs have the opportunity to provide respite for young parents.

Parenting as a teen presents many challenges for youth, their offspring, and the professionals who seek to help them. Youth development provides an approach to assist in promoting the health and development of young mothers and fathers. Let us not forget that these young parents are still adolescents with much of their lives of hope ahead of them. •

<sup>1</sup> Benson, P. L., & Saito, R. N. (2000). The scientific foundations of youth development. In *Youth development: Issues, challenges, and directions*. Philadelphia, PA: Private/Public Ventures

<sup>2</sup> National Research Council and Institute of Medicine (2002). *Community programs to promote youth development*. Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth. Jacquelyne Eccles and Jennifer A. Gootman, eds. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

<sup>3</sup> Dubrow, N. F. & Gabarino, J. (1989). Living in the War Zone: Mothers and young children in a public housing development. *American Psychologist*, 1 (68), 3-20.

<sup>4</sup> Meschke, L. L. & Dettmer, K. (November 2002). Hmong adolescent mothers: Their chosen path and undetermined future. Presented at the annual conference of the National Council on Family Relations, Rochester, NY.

### What do you think of the Monitor?



Later this winter we will be sending you an electronic survey to assess whether the **Monitor** is meeting your interests and needs. Please read this issue of the **Monitor** knowing that we will be coming back to you for your important feedback!

## PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH

The following publications and research link youth development to adolescent sexual health:

Brindis C, Davis L. *Linking Teen Pregnancy Prevention to Youth Development*. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, 1998.  
www.advocatesforyouth.org.

Kirby D, Lezin N, Afriye R, Gallucci G. *Preventing Teen Pregnancy Youth Development and After-School Programs*. Scotts Valley, CA: ETR Associates, 2003.  
www.etr.org/recapp/research/journal200303.htm

Lezin N. *Youth Development and Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention*. Scotts Valley, CA: ETR Associates, 2004.  
www.etr.org/recapp/theories/youthdev/index.htm.

Pagliaro S, Klindera K. *Issues at a Glance—Youth Development: Strengthening Prevention Strategies*. Advocates for Youth, 2001.  
www.advocatesforyouth.org.

SIECUS. *On the Right Track – Youth Development and Sexuality Education*. SIECUS, 2004. www.siecus.org.

## RESOURCES AND WEBSITES – YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### *MN Youth Work Institute – Center for 4-H Youth Development*

www.mnywi.org  
612-624-1999

The MN Youth Work Institute supports the education, training and professional development of adults who work with and on behalf of young people. Institute training programs include foundations in youth work, cross-cultural awareness and key skill development for youth workers and youth development organizations such as program evaluation and quality.

### *Healthy Youth Development Prevention Research Center*

www.prc.umn.edu  
612-625-1674

The Healthy Youth Development Prevention Research Center collaborates with community-based, youth serving organizations to promote youth development through research, training and advocacy. Formally the National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Research Center.

### *Forum for Youth Investment*

www.forumforyouthinvestment.org  
202-207-3333

This website contains papers, articles, editorials, presentations and other tools that focus on the "big picture" of what young people need, do and offer and of what it takes to make a difference in their lives.

### *National Youth Development Information Center*

www.nydic.org  
1-877-NYDIC-4-U

Website for youth workers provides information on: funding, programming, research, policy, job and training opportunities. NYDIC also provides current news to the youth development field and has a large online library. NYDIC is an initiative of the National Collaboration for Youth.

### *The Search Institute*

www.search-institute.org  
612-376-8955 or 800-888-7828

The Search Institute, known for its 40 "developmental assets," is dedicated to providing leadership, knowledge, and resources to promote healthy children, youth and communities.

## MODEL PROGRAMS

The following program models have effectively incorporated youth development strategies to prevent teen pregnancy:

### *A Good Time: After-School Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy*

www.teenpregnancy.org/works/pdf/goodtime.pdf

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy in partnership with Child Trends produced *A Good Time*. This publication provides detailed descriptions of those after-school programs that have been shown through careful research to have a positive impact on adolescent behavior.

### *Children's Aid Society: Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program*

www.stopteenpregnancy.com/

The program incorporates parent participation and includes seven program components: educational support, career awareness and job club, lifetime sports, creative expression, comprehensive medical and dental services, mental health services and family life/sex education. The overall philosophy of this approach is based on the belief that young people with whom we work are not "at risk" but rather "at promise." Their goodness, gifts and possibilities constitute the context of our work with them.

### *The Seattle Social Development Project*

www.depts.washington.edu/ssdp/  
www.advocatesforyouth.org/programsthatwork/17seattle.htm

A multi-year elementary school intervention combining teacher training, parent skills development and child education was implemented in selected treatment schools to foster stronger links between individuals and their social networks.

## MOAPPP Monitor

Newsletter of the Minnesota  
Organization on Adolescent  
Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting

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**MOAPPP counts on memberships to provide the many programs and services that you, and others who work with and care about youth, have come to depend on:**

- **Annual conference:** the only one of its kind in Minnesota that showcases prevention research, strategies and program ideas
- **Frequent trainings** throughout the year bringing you the latest information and skills
- **Valuable information** about the most current science-based, best practice strategies from the field
- **A website** that contains over 150 pages of online information and resources
- **Public policy and advocacy initiatives, trainings and information**
- **MOAPPP Monitor**
- **Electronic E-Monthly**
- **Networking opportunities** with others who work in the field
- **Community awareness** through media partnerships

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