HYP’s Teen Pregnancy Prevention Needs Assessment

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Needs Assessment

Objective: to better understand the supports and barriers within our community to prevent teen pregnancy.

Research question: What is the status of teen pregnancy prevention in Austin and surrounding areas?
Advisory Team

Comprised of volunteer, youth-serving professionals of varying backgrounds, with the support of their organizations

Principal Investigator: Monica Faulkner, UT’s Child & Family Research Institute

Co-Investigators: Jeni Brazeal & Laura Marra, UT’s Child & Family Research Institute
Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators

Advisory Team

- Literature Review Workgroup
- Instrument Creation Workgroup
- Training Workgroup
- Recruitment Workgroup
- Facilitation Workgroup
- Data Analysis Workgroup
Literature Review

Status of Teen Sexual Health in Texas and Travis County

Understanding Risk and Protective Factors for Teen Pregnancy

Interventions

Policies Affecting Teens’ Sexual Health
Status of Teen Sexual Health in Texas & Travis County

Table 2. Birth Rates, Travis County Compared to Texas and the U.S., 2012
Source: Texas Department of State Health Services (2014). Austin, TX: Center for Health Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother’s Age</th>
<th>Travis County</th>
<th>Texas</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 – 14 years</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 19 years</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Teen Birth Rates by Race/Ethnicity, Travis County, 2012
Source: Texas Department of State Health Services (2014). Austin, TX: Center for Health Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Mother’s Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methods

Focus groups with:
- Teens (13-19)
- Teen mothers
- Teen Fathers
- Parents

Online surveys with:
- Service providers
- Educators/Administrators
- Medical providers
Participation

The majority of participants in this study are service providers.

- 83 (61.9%) Service Providers
- 38 (28.4%) Educators
- 13 (9.7%) Medical Providers
Survey Findings

WHAT PUTS YOUTH AT RISK?

- LACK OF CONTRACEPTIVE USE: 80.6%
- LACK OF EDUCATION ABOUT CONTRACEPTIVE USE: 76.1%
- LACK OF SELF-EFFICACY REGARDING CONTRACEPTIVE USE: 72.4%
- LACK OF ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTION: 67.9%
- LACK OF SUPPORTIVE PARTNERS: 61.2%
- LACK OF CAREER/EDUCATION GOALS: 50.0%

PERCENT INDICATING ‘RISK’
WHAT DO YOUTH NEED?

- EDUCATION/CAREER TRAINING: 87.3%
- SEX EDUCATION: 84.9%
- HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP INFO AND SUPPORT: 83.9%
- PARENTAL COMMUNICATION: 82.4%
- PARENTAL SUPPORT: 80.8%
- CONFIDENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES: 76.8%
- FINANCIAL LITERACY (EDUCATORS ONLY): 74.3%
- INFO ABOUT BEING A PARENT (EDUCATORS ONLY): 74.3%
- SAFE LIVING ENVIRONMENTS: 47.2%

PERCENT INDICATING ‘ALWAYS A NEED’
### WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS YOUTH FACE?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access Barriers</th>
<th>Sometimes a barrier</th>
<th>Always a barrier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partners are not supportive</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of agency funding (Service providers only)</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of transportation</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents are not supportive</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth do not know about us</td>
<td>68.3%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitlists</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency cannot access youth (Service providers only)</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of health insurance</td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidential services</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are the barriers to providing youth information & services?

Survey Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Medical Providers</th>
<th>Service Providers</th>
<th>Educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education materials</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health literacy</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental support</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State laws</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FOCUS GROUPS
Focus groups

10 agencies

- Travis County HHSD
- LifeWorks
- American YouthWorks
- Goodwill
- Changing Lives
- Austin Youth Development
- Any Baby Can
- Boys & Girls Club
- Planned Parenthood
- SafePlace

16 focus groups

- 5 groups with teens
- 3 groups with teen moms
- 2 groups with teen dads
- 3 groups with parents
- 2 groups with Spanish speaking parents

73 participants

- 36 teens
- 13 teen mothers
- 4 teen fathers
- 20 parents
Focus Group Findings: Teens

Perceptions of relationships

Decision-making around sexual activity and contraceptive use

Factors that influence their decision-making

Suggested prevention strategies
Teen Perceptions of Relationships

Relationships
Naïve
Casual vs. committed
Number of partners

Reasons
Not wanting to be single
Going out just to go out
Having fun
Gaining experience

“They [teens] just don’t know. They don’t have any experience to know. They don’t know what they like, dislike. They don’t know what they want, don’t want.”

“I know a lot of friends who just like sleep with people whenever they can.”

“They do hug and kiss, but then sometimes they don’t give that person what they want, so they [their partners] go find it from somebody else after school when nobody can see them.”
Teen Perceptions of Sex and Decision-Making

Teen Sex

Normalized
Impulsive decision-making
Decision to have sex should be mutual

“We all get the urges to have sex. It happens. It’s just life. It’s a part of being a mammal.”

“The majority of teens are living for now... they’re not thinking about the future, or tomorrow, or next week, they’re thinking about now, today.”
Teen Perceptions of Sex and Decision-Making

Sexually Active Teens
Gender differences
Adult vs Peers

“Well the girls who have sex are sluts and the popular guys all have sex.”

Abstinent Teens
Stigma, judgment
Peer groups

“...they tease you and all this stuff, so you kind of think like, well should I do this? Should I just do it so they’ll stop talking? Should I lie about it?”
Teen Decisions around Contraceptive Use

Prevention Methods
Birth Control
  Types
  Where to get
  Misconceptions

Responsibility
Birth Control vs Condoms
Gender differences

“You’re ready if you have no problem with going to the store and getting condoms and birth control, but if you’re ashamed to get those things then you probably shouldn’t be having sex.”

“For guys, it’s more like, ‘Oh I don’t want to get a disease and my penis falls off.’ For girls, it’s like, ‘I don’t want to have no baby.’"
Unhealthy Gender Norms

Stark gender stereotypes
- Boys seen as popular
- Girls stigmatized

Vulnerable girls
- targeted for pressure
- desire to feel attractive

Focus Group Findings

“It’s a double standard between girls and guys. Guys, they see him like, ‘oh he’s a player,’ you know, he has all these girls, but for girls it’s ‘she’s a ho’.”

“Find vulnerable girls who like just got out of a break-up or they don’t find themselves attractive or anything and then they attack.”
Individual Factors Impacting Teen Pregnancy

Risk Factors
- Feeling cared for/loved
- Substance use

Protective Factors
- Values
- Future aspirations
- Religion

“Also I would like to bring something to the world but not a kid. Something that I am proud of ....I’d like to be able to show my kids that I’ve done this...”

“They are just trying to get the thrill of how it feels with someone they care about.”

“I feel like I’d be happier with a kid because a kid’s going to love you no matter what you raise them.”
Peer acceptance and validation

Pressure

Attitudes towards teen pregnancy

“I’ve just noticed a lot of friends openly say, ‘oh I have a lot of sex,’ but then privately, ‘I’m a virgin.’ It’s like oh. They want it to be seen like they’re having sex but they are not.”

“...a lot of kids and teenagers I’ve met sincerely want a kid and sincerely think they can handle it..”
Social Media’s Impact

Teen sex
opportunity for casual sex
posting about peers’ sex
lives

Pregnant Teens
post pictures and
pregnancy updates
use to make decisions

“...some of the kids they publically
put it out on Facebook and fight
about how, you know who said
this such and such person was a
virgin... social media has a way
into people’s sex lives.”

“Like on Facebook and Twitter -
1000 Likes and I’ll keep the baby”
The Influence of Partners

Pressure
Partner’s values around sex
Decision around birth control

“They don’t want to lose the person they’re with, so they feel pressure that they have to have sex.”
Lack of Family Guidance Makes It Easy to Engage in Sex

Family dynamics and attachment
Guidance
Supervision

Family modeling
Siblings

Communication

“Lack of Family Guidance Makes It Easy to Engage in Sex

Family dynamics and attachment
Guidance
Supervision

Family modeling
Siblings

Communication

“It’s just really easy to happen if you don’t have, you know, a lot of parental guidance.”

“They [parents] don’t tell you about the things that’s out there. Like they’ll tell you about STDs and all that but they won’t tell you like what you can do to deal with stuff. Like honestly, the stuff I know I learned it in school from like people my age.”
Responses by Schools Toward Teen Pregnancy

Traditional public schools
- higher rates and more services
- unintended consequences

Private, academically focused, higher SES
- stigma
- asked to leave
  “pregnancy scares”

- “You can’t even say congratulations anymore, it’s like ‘you too?’”
- “It’s a tradition whichever cheerleader drops out of cheerleading because they are pregnant becomes the next homecoming queen.”
- “The school I go to if you’re pregnant, you’re asked to leave”
Glamorizes sex and negatively influence teens

Mixed responses to *Teen Mom* and *16 and Pregnant*

“We idolize... *Kids idolize pop stars* and when they see a pop star doing something its like, ‘oh, it’s ok,’ so they do it.”

“*Sex sells... It’s entertainment*”

“It *Teen Mom* makes me want to have a kid!”
Focus Group Findings: Teen Parents

Unexpected Pregnancies

Responses to Teen Pregnancy

Impact of Teen Pregnancy

Suggested Prevention Strategies
Unexpected Pregnancies

“I wasn’t the type”

Prevention
- sex ed
- timing
- parent involvement

“‘Cause like I had told myself I would never have kids and so and I wasn’t the type, like people put you in a box, you know, there’s a type of person who gets pregnant... if you get pregnant you’re supposed to be a ho and that’s not how I was. I was like really book smart and like you know so I didn’t think it would be me.”

“...it’s not going to happen to me. It’s only to stupid people—and then it happened to me.”
Individual Responses to Teen Pregnancy

Mothers
feelings of anger and depression

“\[\text{The first time I found out I was pregnant I was pissed I mean I was upset the whole nine months, like I didn’t even get over it.}\]

Fathers
First action is to look for a job
Incarcerated fathers

“But once I found out my girl was pregnant, it’s like, you gotta motivate yourself to really look for a job... it’s like I got something to live for, I can’t play around with my life.”
Family Responses to Teen Pregnancy

Negative reactions
impact on mental health

Supportive families

“I got really like depressed about it because my whole family just put me down, ‘Oh you messed up your life. You just went downhill...’ It took awhile... to accept the fact that I was pregnant and get over it, of being depressed”

“...even though she [mom] was mad and upset about it, she was still really supportive and she helped me how to bathe and feed my baby and all of that.”
Unsolicited Advice and Difficulties Obtaining Services

Unsolicited advice from adults

Difficulty obtaining needed services

Limitations
Lack of guidance
Childcare

“My nurse come out she try to, really try to persuade me to put my baby father on child support.”

“If you’re not doing it their way, then you’re not doing it right. Because you’re young so you don’t know.”

“I know they have programs for teens and dads to find a job or something but they always told me I wasn’t in need or I didn’t go to an at-risk school.”
Impact of Teen Pregnancy

Emotional strain

Social life

Relationship with partners

"I would cry all the time at nighttime I could not get any sleep because he would just wake up in the middle of the night and just cry."

"I don’t still hang out with a lot that I was friends with. Like, I hang out with people that have kids too."

"She just felt as a mom like she should always have control of the baby... that kind of hurt our relationship"

"I get that he’s [partner] exhausted but he doesn’t understand that I’m exhausted too."
Teens’ Advice for Future Prevention Strategies

Realistic guidance

Freedom to make choices

Open communication and trust

Timing- earlier

“You [parents] want to give them [teens] a little bit of freedom. So that way, they have respect towards you, they don’t hate you.”

“Be blunt and very forward about it. Being honest about it and not shying away.”

“People who’s like teachers, principals, parents, need to educate the kids a lot more earlier… because like 8th grade is not good enough.”
Teens’ Advice for Future Prevention Strategies

Comprehensive sex education
- Birth control and STIs
- Local resources access and availability
- Peer-led (young adults and teen parents)
- Positive messaging
- LGBTQ Inclusive

Focus Group Findings

“At school [if] they would talk to us about preventing pregnancy, instead of preparing for pregnancy, I think that would have helped a lot.” -Teen Parent

“I think that they should like show people how to use a condom and stuff.” -Teen

“Like let them know about the dangers, as in diseases...letting teenagers know what the consequences of sex are and what are the... pros and cons of sex.” -Teen
Teens’ Advice for Future Prevention Strategies

“Bring in people [teen parents] cause those are the people that have been through those situations... have them speak in front of people. They actually make more of a difference than the parents just telling them, ‘No don’t do it, it’s bad and stuff and like you'll die or something.’” -Teen

“I do like the idea of... discussing the kinda like the real life consequences. But I don’t think it should be- I think that the health conversation for teenagers should be less about, ‘I’m going to scare you into never wanting to have sex ever ever ever!’” -Teen

“I’ll go to schools and talk to kids.” -Teen parent

“I don’t know, like all these discussions about sexuality and stuff... like a lot of them are very much for like straight people, and that’s all we talk about.” -Teen
Focus Group Findings: Parents

Parents as Educators
Community resources to support their children
Suggested prevention strategies
Parents as Educators

Influence and responsibility

“Introduce them to things that are safe, talk to them about safe sex, talk to them about sex, period.”

Trust and respect

“It’s our responsibility to teach them what the pros and cons of sex is really.”

Discomfort and uncertainty

“For example, between me and my daughter- I don’t know what age is the right age to begin talking.”
Community Resources to Support their Children

Struggled to identify

Want support from schools and churches

“... they don’t have sex education in school anymore. And I think that’s what help a lot of people when I was growing up, was sex ed in school.”
Barriers to Accessing Services

Awareness
Health insurance
Transportation
Hours of operation
Language barriers
“God complex”
Teens

“...you don’t want to be the parent that is failing to give their child what they think they need, but I can tell you, I don’t care how close you are with your child... they are not going to tell you everything.”
Gender-Transformative Approach

“strive to examine, question, and change rigid gender norms and imbalance of power”

address unhealthy relationship dynamics

opens the door for advanced conversations around gender and sexuality
Working with Youth

Pathways to Adulthood
view parenthood as entry into adulthood
educational and occupational opportunities

Youth-Driven Programs
peer education, especially with teen parents
address realities
reduce stigma
Supporting Parents

**Education**
ongoing communication

**Community marketing campaigns**
promote sex positivity
challenge parents to talk with kids
normalize sexuality
Advocating for Policies

Fund services

Allow space for discussions in schools, public places (at younger ages)

Provide real information

Support teen parents
QUESTIONS?