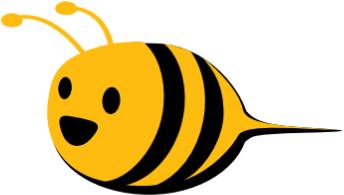


let's  
talk  
month



PLANNING GUIDEBOOK

BY BARBARA HUBERMAN, RN, BSN, MED

ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH 2012, REVISED EDITION

Rights. Respect. Responsibility.

# **Let's Talk Month**

## **PLANNING GUIDEBOOK**

**BY BARBARA HUBERMAN, RN, BSN, MED**

**ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH 2012, REVISED EDITION**

Advocates for Youth, 2012, Revised Edition

Debra Hauser, President  
Advocates for Youth  
2000 M Street NW, Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202.419.3420  
Fax: 202.419.1448  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

Advocates for Youth — Helping young people make safe and responsible decisions about sex

Advocates for Youth is dedicated to creating programs and advocating for policies that help young people make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Advocates provides information, training, and strategic assistance to youth-serving organizations, youth activists, policy makers, and the media in the United States and developing nations. The first edition of this guidebook was written for Advocates for Youth in 1997 by Barbara Huberman, Director of Education & Outreach at Advocates for Youth. In addition, Advocates for Youth is grateful to the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (APPCNC) who began Let's Talk Month in 1985 and later generously encouraged Advocates to utilize its experience and its materials to become the national sponsor of Let's Talk Month.

Contributions to previous revised editions, Beth Pellettieri and Anna Hoffman, Interns; and Susan Pagliaro

# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>CHAPTER I. PLANNING &amp; IMPLEMENTING LET’S TALK MONTH</b>	<b>7</b>
• Initial Steps.....	7
• Who’s Who in Let’s Talk Month campaigns.....	7
• The Steering Committee .....	8
• Working Committees.....	9
• Potential Partners—Participants and Co-Sponsors.....	10
• Funding.....	10
• Materials.....	11
• Community-Wide Events .....	11
• Ideas and Strategies for Participating Organizations .....	12
• Suggested Time Line of a Let’s Talk Month Campaign .....	15
<b>CHAPTER II. INVOLVING YOUTH—YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE PARENT CHILD COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>17</b>
• Building Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships.....	17
• Barriers to Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships .....	21
• Tips for Working with Youth.....	23
• Tips for Working with Adults.....	23
• Ideas for Activities by and for Youth .....	24
<b>CHAPTER III. WORKING WITH MEDIA</b>	<b>25</b>
• Introduction .....	25
• The Spokesperson and the Interview.....	26
• The Story .....	26
• The Press Information Packet.....	26
• When the Press Calls .....	26
• When Contacting the Media .....	26
• Media Activities .....	27
• Sample Press Release.....	29
• Sample Public Service Announcements.....	30
<b>CHAPTER IV. SAMPLE FORMS</b>	<b>32</b>
• Sample A: Invitation Form from the Let’s Talk Month Steering Committee.....	31
• Sample B: Letter Asking Agencies to Co-Sponsor LTM.....	32
• Sample C: Sample Let’s Talk Month Agency Participation Form for the Community Calendar, Public Relations, and the Coordinating Agency.....	34
• Sample D: LTM Final Report form for Participating Organizations.....	35

# Table of Contents (Continued)

<b>SECTION V. WORK SHEETS AND HANDOUTS FOR FACILITATORS</b>	<b>37</b>
• Characteristics of Parents of Sexually Healthy Adolescents .....	<b>38</b>
• Sample Certificate: I'm an Askable Parent .....	<b>39</b>
• Sample Contract for Communication between Parents (or Other Caregivers) and Teens .....	<b>40</b>
• Door Slammers When You Talk to Young People .....	<b>41</b>
• Talking with Your Children about Sex, Part 1: Why Do I need to? .....	<b>42</b>
• Talking with Your Children about Sex, Part 2: Why Is so Hard to Talk about Sex? .....	<b>43</b>
• What Children Should Know about Human Sexuality .....	<b>44</b>
• Helpful Hints for Talking about Sex and Sexuality .....	<b>46</b>
• Questions Young People Ask .....	<b>47</b>
• Attitudes and Beliefs .....	<b>48</b>
• How Well Do You Know Your Parents? .....	<b>49</b>
• How Well Do You Know Your Son or Daughter? .....	<b>50</b>
• I Believe .....	<b>51</b>
• Naming the Parts .....	<b>53</b>
 <b>VI: RESOURCES FOR LTM</b>	 <b>59</b>
• Fact Sheet: Parent-Child Communication: Promoting Sexually Healthy Youth .....	<b>60</b>
• Issues at a Glance: Parent Child Communication Programs .....	<b>64</b>
• National Organizations Concerned about Adolescent Reproductive & Sexual Health .....	<b>69</b>
• Websites .....	<b>71</b>
 <b>SECTION VII: SAMPLE MATERIALS FROM LET'S TALK MONTH CAMPAIGNS AROUND THE NATION</b>	 <b>73</b>
• Proclamations .....	<b>74</b>
• Handouts .....	<b>76</b>
• Media .....	<b>86</b>
• Flyers .....	<b>93</b>
• Newsletters .....	<b>95</b>
• Brochures .....	<b>100</b>
• Contests .....	<b>111</b>
• Events .....	<b>116</b>

# Introduction

## **TALKING TOGETHER ABOUT SEXUALITY DURING OCTOBER — NATIONAL LET'S TALK MONTH**

Each year, Let's Talk Month emphasizes the importance of conversations about sex between young people and the adults they trust. Schools, communities of faith, community-based agencies, media, and businesses, can take the leadership in providing activities, resources, and educational programs to support: 1) parents or other care-givers and youth in talking together about sex; and 2) youth in making healthy, responsible decisions about sex. Working together, parents and other adults in the community can provide the information and skills to prepare young people to become healthy adults...and the parents of tomorrow's children.

Providing children and youth with accurate, reliable sex education is an important responsibility. Studies reveal that most kids prefer learning about sex from their parents, but many parents are uncomfortable with this particular responsibility and need support and encouragement to take it on. Parents need to know that they do not need to be experts in order to talk with their children about sex. Parents also need to know how and they need to share their values and beliefs about sex with young people. By talking, parents can be sure their kids receive accurate messages about parents' values. By not talking, parents also share values, but not necessarily the ones they want to share.

Further research about parent child communication, including research on effective programs, can be found in Chapter VI.

## **HISTORY OF LET'S TALK MONTH**

In 1975, Dr. Sol Gordon PhD, a professor of sociology at Syracuse University, wanted

to unify the many organizations that were working to help parents become better sex educators for their children. Dr. Gordon created National Family Sexuality Education Week (NFSEW). Celebrated in October, the week focused attention on the importance of parents and kids talking together about sex. Planned Parenthood affiliates, health departments, parent teacher associations, and other youth-serving agencies responded to the first NFSEW, and have continued to work in ensuing years.

In 1985, the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (APPCNC) and several of its local community councils beginning calling their local NFSEM Let's Talk Month. With a more adaptable campaign name which appealed to media and diverse audiences, Let's Talk Month was replicated in over 30 states. In 1995 when the founder of APPCNC joined the staff of Advocates for Youth, Let's Talk Month became national campaign sponsored by Advocates and all states are now participating.

Both Advocates for Youth and Planned Parenthood Federation of America strongly believe in encouraging positive, healthy family communication about sexuality. Each organization develops materials supporting this belief. Advocates and PPFA continue to partner to promote NFSEM and Let's Talk Month together.

Advocates creates materials such as postcards, posters, brochures, bookmarks, etc and they are available to purchase or download. This manual is updated bi-annually with new examples from state/community campaigns.



# Chapter I - Planning and Implementing Let's Talk Month

## INITIAL STEPS

Any community or state group can organize and coordinate LTM. A coordinating or sponsoring organization, a steering committee, and a number of working committees can plan and run LTM. An existing council or task force on teen pregnancy can be an excellent local coordinating agency or sponsor for LTM. If your community lacks a council on teen pregnancy, another local agency can coordinate LTM. The coordinating organization will recruit members of a steering committee and assist the committee to plan and implement LTM activities and events in the community (or state). The coordinating organization can provide the chair and/or spokesperson of the steering committee and/or agree to serve as the communications center for LTM. The coordinating organization can also implement a new media campaign or create materials—such as a community calendar of events and programs, bumper stickers, buttons, stickers, balloons, and pamphlets—for participating organizations to use to reach youth, parents, the press, policy makers, businesses, and the public, or it October leave the creation of these materials to working committees and to co-sponsoring organizations.

Even a single organization can offer activities during October to heighten awareness of parent-child communication. The organization can pick and choose from among many possible activities to be offered in October. With planning, LTM can grow each year, and the number and variety of involved organizations can also multiply as LTM gains visibility in the community.

*The single most important thing* is to actively involve young people and parents from the very beginning—in all aspects of brainstorming, planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating a LTM campaign and its activities. Why? Because young people are the ones toward whom the entire campaign

strives to reach. They are also the ones who know what messages will resonate with their peers. They know what is going on. They know what will work and what most certainly will not work. They have energy, compassion, creativity, and enthusiasm. Involve them and value them and their contributions—this will make your LTM campaign the best yet.

## WHO'S WHO IN LET'S TALK MONTH CAMPAIGNS?

- **Local or state Coordinating Agency or Sponsor**—The individual or organization that initiates the planning of LTM; often provides strong support for the campaign and recruits the steering committee
- **Steering Committee**—A group of about 10 individuals (including at least two youth) who represent youth-serving organizations, government agencies, media, parents, and businesses in the community and who will work to organize and support a LTM campaign
- **Co-Sponsors**—Organizations, agencies, faith communities, media, parent and youth organizations, and businesses that openly support LTM
- **Participating Organizations**—Organizations that offer activities, events, and/or programs for youth and parents during October as part of LTM; not restricted to co-sponsors, members of the steering committee, and/or the local coordinating agency
- **Working Committees**—Individuals and/or groups appointed by the steering committee to handle much of the actual work of the LTM campaign; members—especially including youth—can also represent co-sponsors and/or participating organizations

More details about these committees and groups and their efforts follow.

## THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Activities and events during Let's Talk Month provide the opportunity to reach the public and encourage participation in LTM. The steering committee should be broad-based and able to plan and implement LTM. Look for youth and for leaders from organizations that work with youth or that focus on reproductive health care, parent education, and/or family strengthening. Consider approaching leaders from schools, civic clubs, news media, business, and faith communities. Be sure to include leaders of ethnic groups or other populations for whom adolescent sexual health is a compelling issue. Most importantly, include young people! An excellent steering committee might include at least one representative from each of the following groups except youth. Include at least two youth to ensure that their voices are heard and not silenced by the adults around them. Include:

- Youth
- Nonprofit organizations
- Schools & other educational institutions
- Parent groups
- Policy makers
- Communities of faith
- Businesses
- Health care providers
- Media

Identify potential members for the steering committee from the groups above. Call each potential member or member organization and send information about LTM. Invite all the potential members to a meeting to learn more about LTM and its goals. Be sure to set the meeting (and all future meetings) at times and in places accessible to youth. At the meeting, introduce LTM; talk about things that local groups in other areas have done; talk about successes of LTM (see examples in this guidebook). Ask the potential members to commit to participating. Ideally, steering committee members will be able to devote time and effort to serving on one of the working committees as well and will also agree to implement at least one LTM activity.

The steering committee should set the goals for the LTM campaign and activities. For example, the committee might set the goal of:

- Increasing family awareness of the importance of talking about sex.
- Encouraging the community to offer programs to help parents become more comfortable talking about sex.
- Highlighting effective parent child communications programs;
- Increasing communication about sexuality between parents (or other caregivers) and young people;
- Encouraging teens to make responsible decisions about sex—including delaying the initiation of sex and, among sexually active youth, using contraception.

While participants in the campaign will develop their own activities, sharing an overall goal can multiply the effects of individual activities and make the entire campaign more coherent and powerful. An approach that includes clear goals may enhance recruitment efforts as well.

Other important tasks for the steering community can include recruiting “honorary members,” inviting the participation of organizations and individuals as co-sponsors and/or participants, and setting up working committees and a speakers’ bureau. Some of these activities may, instead be handled by the working committees which the steering committee must establish. Throughout the campaign, the steering committee will support and encourage the working committees.

- **Appoint honorary members**—The steering committee may want to consider asking prominent members of the community to be “honorary” members of the steering committee or of an advisory committee. As such, the honorary members will primarily lend their names to the LTM efforts. Consider asking radio or television personalities, state and local elected officials, superintendents of schools, presidents of the local United Way or chamber of commerce, and clergy to be honorary LTM committee members,
- **Establish working committees**—An urgent task of the steering committee is to appoint working committees, or at least the chairs of the working committees,

including Youth Involvement, Special Events, Calendar, Endorsements, Media, and Finance. Each committee should include young people. Once established, these committees will assume many of the actual tasks associated with launching an effective LTM campaign. (See section on Working Committees later in this chapter.)

- **Invite participation by community organizations and leaders**—The steering or the endorsements committee should write organizations, businesses, and leaders, asking them to co-sponsor and/or to participate. Include with the letter a list of the committees and their tasks as well as the committee chairs, asking co-sponsors to join a working committee and/or to plan activities. (See section on Potential Participants and Co-Sponsors, later in this chapter.) A list of suggested activities and events should be one of the first items produced; it should be included in materials sent to all organizations that may participate in or co-sponsor LTM.
- **Set up a speakers' bureau**—The steering committee may also consider setting up a speakers' bureau—a group of youth, community leaders, and service providers willing to give talks or make presentations regarding the importance of the role of parents in sex education. Youth are experts on their own lives; they are often speakers of most interest to other youth; and they are often highly interesting to media. Be sure to include youth among the speakers.

## WORKING COMMITTEES

The LTM steering committee should establish the following committees:

- **Youth Involvement Committee**—Ensures that teens participate actively in all aspects of LTM, from planning and implementing activities, to designing educational messages and working with the media, to participating in all the committees of LTM. At least 50 percent of the members of this committee should under age 25. (See Chapter III, Involving Youth.)
- **Special Events Committee**—Plans and coordinates community-wide activities. All co-sponsors should be listed on the

print materials for all community-wide activities. Activities should be offered at times and in locations that are accessible and attractive to the target audience. Be sure to include youth and parents as members of this committee, since they are the two most important audiences for LTM. (See the section Community-Wide Events, later in this chapter.)

- **Endorsement Committee**—Identifies and secures co-sponsors of LTM and obtains proclamations from elected bodies and officials. (See Chapter VIII, Sample Materials.) Members of this committee ask leaders to:
  - Make a mayoral or gubernatorial proclamation;
  - Hold a public hearing at a session of the town council or state legislature;
  - Sponsor an event;
  - Act as master of ceremonies at a banquet, award presentation, or other event;
  - Present an award to an outstanding program, activity, or leader.
- **Calendar Committee**—Sends out preliminary information and activity forms, compiles the information as the forms are returned, and puts together a community calendar of events. The calendar committee should print one calendar (or at least a list of all events) and distribute it throughout the community or state. Urge the press to announce the events and to send reporters to cover them. (See Chapter VIII, Sample Materials.)
- **Media Committee**—Works with television, radio, new media, and print media as well as with advertising outlets to garner coverage, publicity, and widespread awareness of LTM and its events. Be sure to include youth in crafting media messages and in training as spokespeople. Reporters are often more interested in the views of young people than in the views of traditional media contacts. (See Chapter IV, Working with Media.)
- **Finance Committee**—Obtains the cash, goods, and services needed for LTM, soliciting support from foundations, sponsors, co-sponsors, participating organizations, and concerned community groups.

Include youth, especially those who are considering a future in development, fund-raising, and/or running their own businesses. (See the section Funding, later in this chapter.)

A suggested **timeline** for committees' activities appears at the end of this chapter. While some communities may be able to use an entire year to plan LTM, the time line and the scope of activities can be shortened, as necessary, if communities have less time to devote to planning the campaign.

### POTENTIAL PARTNERS— PARTICIPANTS AND CO-SPONSORS

LTM participants offer activities *during October*, inviting youth and adult members of the public and staff of colleague organizations. The steering committee should ask a variety of individuals, businesses, and agencies to offer events and activities for youth and parents as well as for policy makers and the media. Involving many organizations and offering widely publicized and open events makes LTM a community-wide or state-wide effort. While one organization may initiate and coordinate LTM, the campaign will be more powerful and reach more people if other groups and agencies co-sponsor it. Steering committee members can use their personal contacts to enlist support—co-sponsorship and/or participation. (See Sample Forms in Chapter V.)

### POTENTIAL PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

#### Specific Organizations

- American Red Cross
- Big Brothers / Big Sisters
- Boys & Girls Clubs
- Boy Scouts
- Campfire Girls
- Girls Incorporated
- Girl Scouts
- Head Start
- Junior Leagues
- Kiwanis Clubs
- PTAs
- Planned Parenthood Affiliates
- Rotary Clubs
- United Ways
- YMCA's and/or YWCAs

#### Types of Organizations

- Agricultural extension programs
- Businesses
- Child development agencies
- Communities of faith
- Day care centers
- Family services
- Health departments
- Hospitals
- Juvenile justice programs
- Libraries
- Media
- Mentoring programs
- Neighborhood associations
- Parent organizations
- Rape crisis centers
- Recreation centers
- Restaurants
- Schools
- Service organizations
- Social services
- Teen health centers
- Teen parent programs
- Universities & colleges
- Women's groups
- Youth groups

### FUNDING

The coordinating or sponsoring organization and/or the finance committee (appointed by the steering committee) can develop a budget and seek funds to cover costs. However this responsibility is handled, the budget should include expenses for meeting space(s), telephones, printing and postage, and refreshments for committee meetings. Sometimes, participating organizations and co-sponsors can help defray costs by offering funds or services, such as copying, postage, and telephoning. Often, local businesses and service clubs will be willing to contribute small amounts, especially when the requests are tied to specific events or activities, such as a community forum, a teen theater performance, or a health fair. Businesses and unions may donate printing. Community colleges may provide an excellent source for graphics and design assistance. Communities of faith and service clubs like Kiwanis, Junior League, and Rotary Clubs are often willing to provide funds and other support for activities for family activities. However, to receive these contributions of funds or services, LTM's organizers and/or finance committee must be willing to ask for contributions.

## MATERIALS

**Invitational materials**—The invitational materials are developed in the beginning by the steering committee and include materials that must be updated throughout the planning phase of LTM. These materials include: invitations to join LTM; basic facts about teen pregnancy and pregnancy prevention and about the role of LTM; a list of suggested activities; the ongoing list of already planned activities; and a list of committed and potential speakers and the topics on which they October speak or be willing to speak. (See sections in this chapter on the Steering Committee and Ideas and Strategies for Participating Organizations.)

**Calendar**—The calendar of community events offered during Let's Talk Month is critical to promoting all the events. Each year, the calendar committee should accumulate information on all of the events and programs that will be offered by participating organizations and print an LTM community calendar or list of events, to be distributed throughout the community, including in schools. Each participating organization should receive a supply of the calendars to distribute to its constituents. Some communities design the calendars as large posters that also carry LTM messages or themes. (See Chapter VIII, Sample Materials.)

**Promotional materials**—Promotional materials for LTM are important, and ideas for these materials are limited only by the creativity of participating individuals and organizations. In many communities, the organizers of events give the materials away as publicity or sell them to finance LTM activities. Promotional materials can include:

- Balloons
- Bookmarks
- Campaign buttons
- Candy
- Coffee mugs
- Cups
- Grocery bags
- Notepads
- Palm cards
- Pencils and pens
- Place mats
- Posters
- Stickers

- Table tents
- Tee shirts
- Totes
- Vouchers for goods or services (like free transportation, ice cream cones, free condom, etc.)

For example, coordinators of LTM sometimes develop and distribute posters that include a funny or interesting family communication message. (See Chapter VIII, Sample Materials.) Some communities even sponsor contests for the posters' design. In addition to winning a prize, the designers often get to see their poster used in the following year.

## COMMUNITY-WIDE EVENTS

Community-wide events are exactly that—something that involves and/or is targeted to the entire community. Often, organizers can make smaller events into community-wide ones by combining two or more events. For example, events such as a workshop may be more successful when offered in conjunction with another well-attended program, such as a teen theatre performance or a program in a faith community, at a recreational site, or in school. A teen theater group might offer a performance on teen sexual growth and development, unintended pregnancy, or another important aspect of sexual health at or before a PTA meeting, increasing the number of parents willing to attend the PTA meeting and finding another audience for the theater group. Community-wide events include but are not limited to conferences, forums, health fairs, and teen theater.

**Conferences or Forums**—LTM offers an opportunity to raise awareness about family communication about sex through a community-wide gathering, such as a general awareness conference or forum. Some communities sponsor a conference annually, changing the focus or theme each year. It is important to plan the forum to make it accessible to people of all ages. Such a community forum or conference might focus on:

- Adolescent cognitive development
- Adolescent sexual development
- Alcohol and drug use—the connection with other risk behaviors
- Advocacy—how-to

- Boy talk / Girl talk
- Communicating with adults, youth, partners, or friends
- Facts of life
- Healthy relationships
- How to be an “askable” parent
- Living with your preteen
- Living with your teen
- Parents of teens speak out
- Peer pressure and parent power
- Self-esteem
- Sex education: spiritual perspectives
- Sexual relationships—more than just sex
- Skills, in communication, assertiveness, etc. - particularly geared for families
- Talking about sex at any age
- Teens—talk with us, not at us

**Teen Health Fair**—Schools often hold health fairs. However, a community-wide event would enable teens and parents to learn about family planning, mental health in their community. It could also reach out-of-school youth—those in the community who have already graduated as well as those who not in public schools. To make this a truly well attended and successful event, invite a wide array of groups, including health care providers, teens, parent groups, businesses, and entertainment outlets.

**Teen Theater**—Teenage actors delight audiences, including parents and other youth. There are many plays that deal with teenage sexuality and/or partner communication. Some communities are lucky enough to have teen theater groups which perform for the public; most high schools have a drama department that offers performances at least twice a year. For LTM, teens might be asked to perform a play or to present skits on scenes dealing with issues facing youth. Peer educators sometimes combine performances with opportunities for discussion between actors and members of the audience. Check with your local high schools, Planned Parenthood affiliates, and/or drama clubs to identify partners among local teen theater groups.

**Online Event**—Many community members may be interested in events that take place online. Examples include a “blogathon,” where community members all write about family communication about sex in their own blogs or make contributions to your community organization’s blog; a Twitter

event in which participants ask questions or raise awareness use the same Twitter identifiers (-hashtags”); or a Facebook event in which participants post a special status message to raise awareness among their online contacts. These events are often low cost or free and may attract an audience that wouldn’t participate in in-person events.

## IDEAS AND STRATEGIES FOR PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Remember to encourage participating organizations to recruit youth as active, fully involved members of their efforts.

**Businesses**—Businesses are often interested in visibly supporting local initiatives. Ask restaurants, bookstores, groceries, pharmacies, department and clothing stores, malls, movie theaters, video stores and record shops, boutiques, and hair salons to:

- Display brochures, pamphlets, and other materials on teen pregnancy and sexuality issues.
- Contribute to support a teen theater performance, the health fair, and/or another event.
- Enclose paycheck staffers on teen pregnancy prevention
- Hold lunchtime brown bag seminars at work sites regarding teen pregnancy prevention.
- Use tray liners and/or table tents at local restaurants and teen hangouts.
- Donate space on advertising billboards.
- Post on their own blogs, Facebook and Twitter pages about the event
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

**Communities of Faith**—Faith communities usually welcome the chance to impart their values and beliefs. Ask leaders of churches, synagogues, mosques, and other religious centers to:

- Provide lessons on adolescent sexual development.

- Address family communication about sex in homilies and bulletins.
- Coordinate a clergy conference.
- Sponsor workshops for parents and teens on adolescent development and on communication skills.
- Include prevention messages in sermons in October.
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

### **Community-based Organizations—**

Community-based organizations may be strongly interested in participating in or sponsoring activities during October with a special focus on family communication about sex. Approach adolescent pregnancy prevention organizations, AIDS service organizations, the American Red Cross, health agencies, Planned Parenthood clinics, rape crisis centers, teen centers, day care centers, advocacy groups, libraries, local chapters of national membership organizations, neighborhood associations, religious service organizations, the United Way, Kiwanis, Head Start, mentoring programs, Junior Leagues, and youth-serving organizations. Ask them to:

- Set up a film festival at shopping malls, in community centers, and schools.
- Sponsor a community conference, forum, or panel discussion on family communication about sex.
- Encourage and sponsor training in comprehensive sex education for professionals who work with youth.
- Design an awards program to recognize outstanding programs and/or leaders.
- Sponsor health services for teens at schools and malls.
- Participate in and/or sponsor a health fair for teens and parents.
- Display publications on adolescent sexual development.
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.
- At morning announcements at school, provide scripts to promote discussion of sexuality with parents/adults.

**Health care providers**—Health care providers can play a vital role in increasing awareness of LTM. Ask community health professionals—including family planning services providers, family services workers, counselors, health department staff, health educators, and doctors and nurses to:

- Sponsor and/or participate in a health fair for teens and parents.
- Design and/or display help cards and brochures that list community resources and agencies serving teens and parents.
- Present workshops for parents and teens on sexual health, adolescent development, and/or communication and confidentiality.
- Give talks on adolescent sexual health issues.
- Display posters and flyers about LTM.
- Sponsor workshops, seminars, and presentations on family communication about sex.
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

**Media**—Reporters for newspapers, radio, and TV and writers for magazines often cover subjects related to teens. Ask these reporters to cover LTM and to highlight youth leaders in the LTM campaign. Media coverage will carry LTM messages to many more people than organizations can reach without media's help. Ask media professionals to:

- Write a story highlighting local programs to improve family communication about sex.
- Accept op-eds and articles on teen pregnancy and teen pregnancy prevention.
- Sponsor public service announcements (PSAs), talk shows, documentaries, and/or contests.
- Donate billboards carrying messages about parent-child communication.
- Provide a radio "call in" talk show where teens can talk to professionals about sexual health.
- Film a public forum or debate for local TV.

- Sponsor a poster contest.
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

**Note:** There are a number of state, county, city, and even community level blogs with a wide readership. Seek out local bloggers by searching your community name and the word “bldg” online (e.g. “Cleveland blog”) and interact with them as you would a reporter. They too can raise awareness by writing articles, posting PSAs, and joining a steering committee.

**Parents—**Parents are many teens’ preferred source of information about sexuality. Ask parents, step-parents, grandparents, mentors, and other caregivers to:

- Encourage the PTA to mail letters to parents about teen pregnancy and about communicating with young people regarding sensitive issues such as sex.
- Attend programs and events of LTM.
- Participate in workshops or discussing sensitive issues with young people like sex.
- Obtain school boards’ endorsement of LTM.
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

**Youth Including Peer Educators—**Peer educators (teens talking to teens) can be effective in educating teens about ways to open up conversations with their own parents or other adults. Ask peer educators, teen theater groups, sports teams, school bands, and school club members to:

- Plan and implement a teen health conference.
- Place keepsakes on tables at the prom, to remind teens to take responsibility for their own health.
- Enlist a teen theater group to conduct a performance on parent-child communication about sex. (See section on Community-Wide Events in this chapter.)
- Implement activities. (See Suggestions for Teens at the end of this chapter.)

- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

**Policy makers—**Let’s Talk Month offers an excellent opportunity to educate and involve policy makers in efforts to improve adolescents’ sexual health. Whether the policy maker is the mayor, governor, or a member of the school board, county commission, or state legislature, he/she can promote realistic and relevant teen policies. Securing a proclamation from an elected official can bring media attention to LTM. When a well-known policy maker consents to act as spokesperson for LTM, this can bring a lot of media attention to the effort. Holding a public hearing—especially one in which youth and their parents speak on the issue—can secure the attention and commitment of other policy makers. Inviting policy makers and the press to visit effective youth-serving programs also draws attention to the issue of adolescent sexual health. Some ways to educate and involve policy makers include asking them to:

- Provide proclamations regarding LTM or to assist the steering committee in obtaining a proclamation.
- Hold hearings on teen pregnancy and pregnancy prevention.
- Serve as an honorary chair of LTM.
- Introduce legislation that promotes honest, accurate sexual health information for teens.
- Introduce legislation that encourages parent-child communication about sexual health and also protects adolescents right to confidential health services.
- Speak at community forums.
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

**Schools—**Schools and other educational institutions are often willing to participate in LTM. Ask public, private, parochial, and alternative schools, school-based and school-linked health centers, and universities and community colleges to:

- Distribute the LTM calendar of events and other educational materials.

- Assign essays, speeches, or debates on pregnancy prevention.
- Produce plays that touch upon adolescent sexuality and/or adolescent health.
- Set up display tables that offer information on preventing pregnancy and HIV and other STIs.
- Offer question and answer sessions related to sexuality.
- Devote the PTA meeting during October to LTM.
- Provide prevention messages at morning announcements.
- Join the LTM steering committee or one of its working committees.

**Encourage participation in whatever capacity is feasible for any organization that is interested in supporting LTM and youth's access to accurate information and to confidential sexual health services.**

### **SUGGESTED TIMELINE FOR A LET'S TALK MONTH CAMPAIGN**

#### **January**

- The coordinating organization should form an LTM steering committee, a small group of not more than 10 individuals who will identify the goals and objectives of LTM, head the working committees, and make overall decisions.
- At the first meeting, the steering committee will identify goals and objectives, select chairs of the working committees, and set up a framework for the major decisions regarding LTM.

#### **February through April**

Chairs should convene the committees to begin their work:

- **Youth Involvement Committee**—Ensures the active involvement of young people as full partners in LTM and all of its activities—from steering committee to final evaluation; recruits youth leaders; and ensures the inclusion of youth of differing ethnicity, background, socio-economic levels, religion, and school status. (See Chapter III, Involving Youth.)

- **Endorsement Committee**—Seeks and secures co-sponsors; sends letters to community agencies, faith organizations, schools, youth groups, volunteer organizations, media, local businesses, and health services providers, describing LTM and requesting their participation. (See Chapter V, Sample A.)

- **Calendar Committee**—Distributes a list of potential activities and encourages participation; sends out a preliminary calendar and activity forms; compiles information as forms are returned; and puts together a community calendar of events. (See Sample Forms, Chapter V.)

- **Media Committee**—Plans and involves television, radio, new media, and print media in generating community-wide publicity; discusses types of coverage and ways to obtain them; identifies spokespeople; and develops press packets for LTM and for individual activities occurring in October. (See Chapter IV, Working with the Media.)

- **Special Events Committee**—Plans activities that involve and benefit the entire community, such as a health fair, awards ceremony, educational conference, community forums, training programs, and community-wide contests like rap, disco, essay, and/or poster. (See section of this chapter, Ideas and Strategies for Participants.)

- **Finance Committee**—Develops a budget for the shared programs and activities, including the community calendar of events, health fairs, forums, etc; raises funds to cover these expenses; helps participating agencies identify sources of funding for their activities and programs; ensures funds are on-hand (or promised) by February to pay for shared events. (See Funding section of this chapter.)

#### **May through August**

Working committees continue their activities:

- **Youth Involvement Committee**—Continues its work throughout the planning and execution of LTM activities to ensure full involvement of youth and youth leaders

- **Endorsement Committee**—Requests proclamations from governor, mayor, commissioners, and/or school board
- **Calendar Committee**—Sends out activity forms to all contacts, asking for their return by August compiles, designs, and desktops community calendar of events
- **Media Committee**—Contacts media to line up coverage of activities in advance; prepares press releases and press packets
- **Special Events Committee**—Plans and confirms all special events, with known time lines for each one
- **Finance Committee**—Reviews funds available for shared expenses and adjusts activities as needed; continues fund-raising, as necessary.

#### September

- **Calendar Committee**—Prints calendar, for distribution throughout the community no later than April 15th; ensures distribution to faith organizations, day care centers, community bulletin boards, media, businesses, and schools; also distributes flyers and/or posters

- **Media Committee**—Schedules media interviews and/or editorial boards for LTM; arranges press conference; mails press releases and packets, as appropriate; holds proclamation ceremony

#### October

- Hold activities. Enjoy! Bask in the lime-light! Take a bow for a job well done!

#### November

- **Steering Committee**—Sends evaluation forms to everyone who participated; documents outcomes; begins planning for next year; thanks partners for their participation (See Sample Forms, Chapter V.)

#### December

- Send Advocates for Youth a copy of all your publications, posters, press releases, and materials. Let Advocates know the results of your evaluation.

#### January

- Here we go again! Bigger and better next year!

## Chapter II: Involving Youth—Youth-Adult Partnerships to Promote Parent-Child Communication about Sexuality during Let's Talk Month

It is important to involve youth in all aspects of the LTM campaign. Youth involvement is not a way to patronize youth or to include a token number of youth. Instead it is essential to creating a campaign that meets youth where they are, captures their attention, and speaks their language. Youth involvement is essential to a successful Let's Talk Month. Here is a general guide to building youth-adult partnerships—partnerships that will draw on youth's commitment, energy, passion, and enthusiasm to make LTM into a campaign that can really make a difference in your community.

These articles follow:

1. Building Effective Youth Adult Partnerships
2. Barriers to Building Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships
3. Tips for Working with Youth
4. Tips for Working with Adults
5. Ideas for Activities By and For Youth

### **BUILDING EFFECTIVE YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **What Is a Youth-Adult Partnership?**

A true partnership is one in which each party has the opportunity to make suggestions and decisions and in which the contribution of each is recognized and valued. A youth-adult partnership is one in which adults work in full partnership with young people on issues facing youth and/or on programs and policies affecting youth. In addressing adolescent sexual health issues, youth and adults can work together in a number of ways. Together, they can conduct a needs assessment, write a grant proposal, raise funds, design a program, train new staff, deliver services, implement ideas and projects, oversee a program, collect data, evaluate a program's effectiveness,

improve unsuccessful aspects of a program, and replicate successful programs.

Sharing with youth the power to make decisions means adults' respecting and having confidence in young people's judgment. It means adults' recognizing youth's assets, understanding what the youth will bring to the partnership, and being willing to provide additional training and support when youth need it (just as when including other adults in making decisions). Both youth and adults may need to embrace change in order for the partnership to work. For example, adults may need to modify their ideas about what will and will not work and about times and conditions under which work proceeds. Similarly, youth may need to understand the limitations and realities that affect a program's development, operation, and evaluation.

#### **What Is Not a Genuine Youth Adult Partnership?**

Youth-adult partnerships are not ways to hide or obscure the fact that programs are designed, implemented, and run only by adults. Tokenism is not partnership. Tokenism can appear in many forms. Tokenism could include such actions as:

- Having young people around with no clear role to play
- Assigning youth only those tasks which adults do not want to fulfill
- Having youth make media appearances without any voice in developing the messages, programs, or policies that the youth are expected to talk about
- Having one youth on a board of directors or council to point to as "youth involvement."

Tokenism will leave young people feeling used rather than empowered. The key to

avoiding tokenism is to share with youth the power to make real decisions.

### **Why Are Youth-Adult Partnerships Important?**

Youth-adult partnerships arise from the conviction that young people have a right to participate in developing the programs that will serve them and a right to have a voice in shaping the policies that will affect them. In addition, advocates of youth-adult partnerships argue that programs are more sustainable and effective when youth are partners in their design, development, and implementation. Proponents also assert that evaluation results are more honest and realistic when youth assist in gathering and providing the data on which evaluation is based.

Little research has been done on the effects that youth-adult partnerships may have on youth, adults, organizations, or the processes that these partnerships affect. Research provides some evidence, however, that partnering with youth and respecting their ability to contribute may provide important protective factors for young people. The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development (a division of National 4-H Council) conducted one of the few existing studies on the effect of youth-adult partnerships. The study showed that involving young people in decision making provides them with the essential opportunities and supports (i.e. challenge, relevancy, voice, cause based action, skill building, adult structure, and affirmation) that are consistently shown to help young people achieve mastery, compassion, and health.

Few links have been explicitly identified between resiliency research and the youth-adult partnership movement. However, research has identified many factors that help young people resist stress and negative situations. These factors (discussed below) are produced and facilitated by effective youth-adult partnerships.

First, resiliency research has identified 'protective factors' that seem to account for the difference between those young people who emerge from high risk situations with positive results and those who

do not. While research shows that many factors influence health behaviors, resilient children, in particular, display some important characteristics, including:

- Social competence, including responsiveness, flexibility, empathy, and caring, communication skills, a sense of humor, and other pro-social behaviors
- Problem solving skills, including the ability to think abstractly, reflectively, and flexibly and the ability to arrive at alternative solutions to cognitive and social problems
- Autonomy, including a sense of identity and an ability to act independently and to exert control over one's environment
- Sense of purpose and future, including having healthy expectations, goals, an orientation toward success, motivation to achieve, educational aspirations, hopefulness, hardiness, and a sense of coherence.<sup>2</sup>

Second, research identifies an internal locus of control, or the feeling of being able to have an impact on one's environment and on others, as a key protective factor possessed by resilient youth. In this regard, opportunities for meaningful involvement and participation—such as are found in youth-adult partnerships—may provide youth with opportunities to develop and/or strengthen his/her internal locus of control.<sup>3</sup>

Third, research shows that contributing to one's community has many positive outcomes. One study found that college students who provided community service for credit significantly increased their belief that people can make a difference and that people should be involved in community service and advocacy. They showed significantly increased commitment to performing volunteer service. Finally, they became less likely to blame social services clients for their misfortunes and more likely to stress a need for equal opportunities.<sup>4</sup> Contributing to one's community is the heart of most youth-adult partnerships.

Work in the field of youth development supports these findings. Youth development is defined as *the ongoing growth process in*

*which youth are engaged in attempting to meet their basic personal and social needs to be safe, feel cared for, be valued, be useful, and be spiritually grounded, and build their skills and the competencies that allow them to function and contribute in their daily lives.*- Youth development is facilitated when young people have consistent opportunities to:

- Feel physically and emotionally safe
- Build relationships with caring, connected adults
- Acquire knowledge and information, and
- Engage in meaningful and purposeful activities in ways that offer both continuity and variety.’

These opportunities are abundantly present in genuine youth-adult partnerships.

Proponents of both youth development programs and youth-adult partnerships have in common a belief that youth are caring and capable individuals. Rather than seeing youth as problems to be managed, youth development proponents view young people as valued resources with individual assets. Proponents of youth-adult partnerships see young people as individuals with the capacity to make positive and wide-ranging contributions when they receive support and the opportunity to develop their skills.

Behavior change theory and research on resiliency suggest that, while the types of activities offered by successful youth development programs vary, the emphasis lies in providing opportunities for active participation and real challenges.”<sup>5</sup> Similarly, youth-adult partnerships offer youth immediate opportunities for active participation and real challenge. Few things can more concretely demonstrate a belief in young people’s capabilities than when trusted adults share with youth the power to make decisions.

### Who Else Benefits?

It would be a mistake to assume that the only benefits from these partnerships accrue to youth. Adults and the organizations in which these partnerships operate also benefit from youth adult partnerships.

Adults:

- Experience the competence of youth first hand and begin to perceive young people as legitimate, crucial contributors.
- Enjoy the new energy that youth bring to the work.
- Find their commitment and energy enhanced by working with youth.
- Feel more effective and more confident in working with and relating to youth.
- Understand the needs and concerns of youth, become more attuned to programming issues, and gain a stronger sense of connection to the community.
- Receive fresh ideas from different perspectives.
- Reach a broader spectrum of people.
- Develop more relevant and responsive programming and services.
- Share knowledge.
- Increase creativity.
- Break down stereotypes about both youth and adults.’

The same study also identified positive outcomes for the organizations:

- Young people help clarify and bring focus to the organization’s mission.
- The adults and the organization, as a whole, become more connected and responsive to youth in the community, leading to programming improvements.
- Organizations place a greater value on inclusion and representation and see programs benefiting when multiple and diverse voices participate in making decisions.
- Youth’s making decisions helps convince foundations and other funding agencies that the organization is truly committed to meaningful youth development and/or involvement.<sup>1</sup>

### What Are Important Elements of Effective Youth-Adult Partnerships?

It can be challenging to build effective, sustainable, genuinely collaborative youth-

### References

1. Shepherd Z. et al. Youth in Decision-Making: A Study on the Impacts of Youth on Adults and Organizations. Madison, WI: National 4-H Council, 2000.
2. Pittman KJ, et al. Youth Development and Resilience Research. Washington, DC: Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, 1993.
3. Blum R. Healthy youth development as a model for youth health promotion. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 1998;22:368-375.
4. Giles DE, Eyer J. The impact of a college community service laboratory on students’ personal, social, and cognitive outcomes. *Journal of Adolescence* 1994;17:327-339.
5. Roth J, et al. Promoting healthy adolescents: synthesis of youth development program evaluations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 1998;8:423-459.
6. Sylwander L. Children as Participants: Swedish Experience of Child Participation in Society’s Decision-Making Processes. Stockholm: Swedish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, 2001.

adult partnerships. Successful partnerships have some important elements in common. Effective partnerships:

- Establish clear goals for the partnership. The youth and the adults must understand what their roles and responsibilities will be in achieving the goals.<sup>6</sup>
- Share the power to make decisions. If youth have no power to make decisions, their participation is not one of partnership.
- Get the highest levels of the organization to commit fully to youth's participation in the organization's work.
- Ensure that each adult and young person enters the partnership with a clear understanding of everyone's roles and responsibilities. Not all adults will want to work with youth and not all youth will want to work with adults in a partnership capacity.
- Are selective. Young people vary widely in their development and in their readiness and willingness to assume responsibility. Being clear about the goals of the partnership and the roles that youth will play will help in identifying young people who are committed, reliable, and effective. At the same time, effective partnerships are selective about adult participants. The adults must believe that young people are assets and be willing and able to advocate on behalf of youth when stereotyping or negative assumptions about teens arise.
- Provide capacity building and training. Effective partnerships don't set young people up for failure by throwing them into situations for which they are not prepared. Youth may need training in communication, leadership, assertiveness skills, interviewing, etc., as well as in specific areas of expertise, like HIV prevention education. Similarly, effective partnerships don't set adults up for failure by throwing them into situations for which they are not prepared. Adults need training in communication, collaborative work, interviewing, or working with youth as well as in specific areas of expertise, such as HIV prevention education.
- Are aware that different styles of communication do not imply disrespect, disinterest, or different goals and expectations. Youth and adults say that the best way to resolve conflicts that arise out of different communication styles is to ask questions when one does not understand what is being said or why it is being said. Keeping the common goal in mind can also help resolve conflicts arising out of different communication styles.
- Value youth's participation and what they bring. Effective partnerships hold high expectations for participating youth and are not afraid of holding youth accountable for their responsibilities.
- Value adults' participation and what they bring. Adults frequently offer the partnership knowledge, experience, and access to resources. Effective partnerships guard against discounting potential adult allies, assuming that all adults hold negative stereotypes about youth, or believing that adults will have nothing of value to contribute to a program intended for youth.
- Include room for growth—next steps. Where can youth and adults go next? For example, peer education programs are often great vehicles for empowering young people and helping them develop important skills. However, these programs seldom include opportunities for advancement or for peer educators to assume more responsibility over time. Effective programs ensure that youth and the adults who work with youth have opportunities for advancement. Both youth and adults will have valuable experience and insights to bring to more senior positions in the organization.
- Remember that youth have other interests and priorities. Too often, adults will enthusiastically enlist the participation of a particularly effective and articulate young person in an overwhelming number of obligations and commitments. Check in often with partnership youth to ensure that they are taking on only as much as they can manage without neglecting other important aspects of their lives, such as family, friends, and education. Try to assist youth in recognizing when it is wise to say, "No," and support their decisions.

Youth-adult partnerships offer much to youth, adults, and organizations that

participate in them. Effective partnerships may be difficult to achieve. However, the benefits they offer are wide-ranging and significant. The first step is to acknowledge that youth have value and that their contributions have value. Commitment to youth's rights and a determination to recognize their rights and to hear their voices is the beginning of building effective youth-adult partnerships.

## **BARRIERS TO BUILDING EFFECTIVE YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS**

Why aren't more organizations leaping to establish youth-adult partnerships?

The fact is that adults, youth, and organizations must recognize and dismantle significant barriers to working across age differences. If barriers remain in place, they will undermine the best intentions and waylay even the best-laid plans.

### **Attitudes as Barriers**

Many adults still believe that young people's opinions don't matter, that youth are not capable of contributing in a valuable way, and that adults have nothing to learn from youth. Moreover, cultural norms may prevent adults from even realizing that these attitudes are biased. One way of approaching the issue of changing adults' attitudes about youth is to deal with it as one would any other issue of cultural diversity. Firsthand, personal experience often provides the most effective and far-reaching results in terms of changing people's opinions. One of the benefits of involving young people at high levels of responsibility and decision making is that it enables adults to see teens as thoughtful and contributing people. When anyone comes to see a formerly undifferentiated group as varying and diverse, that person is much more open to disbelieving and refuting negative stereotypes about the group and to valuing the individuals within the group.

Power dynamics, usually rooted in cultural norms, may make it difficult for young people and adults to feel comfortable working together. Formal instruction in school often teaches youth to expect answers from adults, and youth may expect adults to ignore, deride, or veto their ideas. Adults frequently underestimate the knowledge

and creativity of young people and may be accustomed to making decisions without input from youth, even when youth are directly affected by the decisions. Therefore, joint efforts toward solving problems can be difficult, requiring deliberate effort on the part of both adults and youth.

One researcher developed the Spectrum of Attitudes theory and identified three different attitudes that adults may hold toward youth.<sup>7</sup> These attitudes affect adults' ability to believe that young people can make good decisions. These attitudes also determine the extent to which adults will be willing to involve young people as significant partners in decisions about program design, development, implementation, and evaluation.

- **Youth as Objects**—Adults who have this attitude believe in a myth of adult wisdom. They believe adults know what is best for young people. They attempt to control situations involving youth and believe that young people have little to contribute. They may feel the need, based on prior experience, to protect youth from suffering the consequences of potential mistakes. Adults who see youth as objects seldom permit youth more than token involvement. An example of this attitude might be an adult writing a letter to an elected official about an issue pertinent to youth and using a young person's name and signature for impact.
- **Youth as Recipients**—Adults who have this attitude believe they must assist youth to adapt to adult society. They permit young people to take part in making decisions because they think the experience will be 'good for them.' They assume that youth are not yet 'real people' and need practice to learn to 'think like adults.' These adults usually delegate to young people trivial responsibilities and tasks that the adults do not want to undertake. Adults who see youth as recipients usually dictate the terms of youth's involvement and expect young people to adhere to those terms. An example of this attitude might be adults extending an invitation to one young person to join a board of directors otherwise comprised solely of adults. In such a milieu, a young person's voice is seldom raised and little heard. Adults do not expect the young person to

contribute, and the young person knows it and that adults deliberately retain all power and control.

- **Youth as Partners**—Adults who have this attitude respect young people and believe that young people have significant contributions to make now. These adults encourage youth to become involved and firmly believe that youth's involvement is critical to a program's success. They accept youth's having an equal voice in decisions. They recognize that both youth and adults have abilities, strengths, and experience to contribute. Adults who have this attitude will be as comfortable working with youth as with adults and enjoy an environment with both youth and adults. Adults who see youth as partners believe that genuine participation by young people enriches adults just as adults' participation enriches youth and that a mutually respectful relationship recognizes the strengths that each offers. One example might be hiring youth to participate from the beginning in designing a program to meet the needs of a community's youth.

#### Logistical and Organizational Barriers

Good intentions are not enough to create genuine partnerships. Adults who endorse the concept of youth-adult partnerships must also be willing to identify and alter the organizational environment where institutional barriers can be especially significant for young people. Institutional barriers that make genuine youth-adult partnerships difficult include:

- **Hours for Meetings and Work**—An agency's hours of operation usually coincide with times when young people are at school or work. To engage youth, program planners must find nontraditional times at which to hold important meetings. Often, scheduling conflicts can be difficult to overcome. However, compromise is vital if an organization is to create youth-adult partnership. For adults, this may mean altering schedules to hold meetings in the late afternoon, early evening, or on the weekend. For youth, this may mean using school community service hours to attend a daytime meeting.
- **Transportation**—Many young people do not have assured access to a vehicle.

Program planners should schedule meetings in easily accessible locations. They should also provide youth with travel vouchers and/or immediate reimbursement for the cost of travel.

- **Food**—Few young people have the income to purchase meals in business districts or dinners in restaurants. When a meeting occurs at mealtime, the organization should provide young people with food or with sufficient funds to pay for the meal.
- **Equipment and Support**—Agencies should provide youth with the same equipment as other employees, such as computer workstation, mailbox, voice mail, E-mail, and business cards. Failure to do so carries a powerful message that these youth—whether they are volunteers, interns, or peer educators, full-time or part-time—are not important or, at least, are not as important as adult employees.
- **Procedures and Policies**—With input from both youth and adults, organizations should develop policies on youth/adult interactions. For example, if a program involves overnight travel, youth and adults should be clear about their roles and responsibilities in traveling together. The policies will need to respect youth's desire for independence and, at the same time, address the legal liability of the organization, the comfort level and legal responsibilities of adult staff, and parental concerns about security. Organizations may consider establishing policies requiring the consent of parent or guardian for youth's participation, for staffs driving young people somewhere, etc. The setting and purpose of each youth-adult partnership will help determine other institutional factors that may need to be addressed in the organization's policies and procedures.
- **Training**—In agencies that have always operated from an exclusively adult perspective, staff may need cultural competency training. Staff—whether working directly with youth or not—will need to accept young people's perspectives and ideas and adapt to changing workplace rules to meet the needs of youth. Each organization and each staff member must make determined efforts to let each

#### Reference

- 1.. National 4-H Council. Creating Youth/Adult Partnerships; The Training Curricula for Youth, Adults, and Youth/Adult Teams. Chevy Chase, MD; The Council. 1997.

young person know he/she is valued.

It is work to achieve youth-adult partnership, and it is not easy work. However, the benefits are enormous for youth and for organizations that care about young people. When youth and adults keep the potential benefits in mind, they will find that the work is worthwhile. It may even turn out to be easier than they thought it would be.

This article is drawn, in part, from Klindera K and Menderweld J. *Youth Involvement in Prevention Programming*. [Issues at a Glance]. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth.

### TIPS FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

- Be open to and nonjudgmental about young people's insights and suggestions. Let them know that their involvement is important.
- Take advantage of the expertise that teens offer. Young people know about, and should be encouraged to share the needs of their community. Affirm this input.
- Make sure youth will participate in meaningful ways. Young people should be involved in making decisions from the beginning of the project. Actively ask teens' opinions.
- Be honest about expectations for the project, what you want the teens to contribute, and how you hope to benefit from teen participation. Don't expect more from a teen than you would from an adult. Keep expectations realistic; hold young people to your expectations. Do not patronize youth by lowering your expectations.
- Integrate young people into group and coalition efforts. Schedule meetings when teens can attend and in a location accessible to teens. Like everyone else, keep young people informed about plans and meeting times.
- Treat teens as individuals. Don't assume one teen represents the views of many teens. Assure the young person that you are interested in her/his individual opinion and don't expect him/her to speak for an entire population.
- Be prepared ahead of time to offer support. Think about kinds of support (financial, logistical, training, emotional, etc.) it will take to involve teens in the project, and who will be responsible for providing this support.
- Make the work interactive, fun, and valuable. Like adults, youth are more likely to get involved and remain active in projects that are interesting and fulfilling.
- Many youth feel intimidated by adults and are not used to participating in discussions with adults. Some may feel they have nothing to contribute. It will require time and commitment to get the input of these youth. Be aware of this factor and work to overcome it.
- Don't make assumptions about what individual young people are like.
- Don't move too fast. Remember that it takes time to develop trust and rapport with youth because some youth are unsure about adults' intentions. Take the time and make the effort to develop a good relationship with youth before expecting much. Remember, too, that this work is often new to youth; take the time to explain why actions are being taken. Youth may interpret adults' being abrupt and hurried as a sign of disinterest in youth's participation; so go slow and explain what's going on.
- Remember that there are times when youth need to say, "No." They have many competing interests and responsibilities in their lives. Their education is important. Their relationships and communities are important. Having fun is important. They need time and energy for these interests and responsibilities.

### TIPS FOR WORKING WITH ADULTS

- Most adults have good intentions. Remember that many of them are simply not used to working in partnership with young people.
- Criticism doesn't necessarily mean condescension or that an adult doesn't value your contribution. It may mean the adult is treating you the same way he/she would an adult colleague. Remember that adults are used to critiquing each

- other's work and offering constructive ideas to improve a project. Just because an adult doesn't agree with someone, it doesn't mean that he/she disrespects that person.
- Adults may not be aware of the capabilities of young people. They can be told a hundred times that young people are mature, but showing them is the best way to make the case.
- Adults often feel responsible for the success or failure of the project. This is what makes it hard for them to share power. They may need reassurance that you are willing to share in both the successes and the failures.
- Adults are just as uncertain as youth. They have just learned to disguise it better.
- Sometimes adults use phrases and expressions, whether consciously or not, that annoy young people and are red flags that they aren't treating youth as partners. Like an annoying drip of water, these phrases and expressions can erode a relationship. Be prepared to call adults on their language.
- Don't be afraid to ask for clarification. Adults often use words, phrases, and acronyms that you might not understand. Adults new to the program may also not understand them either. The language of the nonprofit sector is riddled with terms that may bewilder any newcomer.
- Don't be afraid to say, "No." Adults will understand that you have other important commitments, like your education, family, friends, hobbies, and sports.
- Invited health care professionals to speak to a class or club
- Written short stories about family communication about sex
- Created posters and asked to hang them in synagogues, churches, schools, and community centers
- Designed an advertisement or public service announcement for cable television and/or radio
- Created and filmed a short public service skit and posted on YouTube, then widely shared the video
- Collected and donated food and other useful items for a shelter
- Interviewed a teenage mother and/or father about their life and published the story in a local media outlet
- Created and presented a theater drama related to teens and sexuality
- Organized a workshop to improve communication between teens and their parents
- Organized a workshop to encourage healthy, assertive communication between teens in a relationship
- Encouraged their school to participate in LTM
- Posted on blogs, Facebook, and Twitter about LTM
- Used text messaging to raise awareness about LTM
- Wrote and submitted letters to the editor regarding their need for comprehensive sex education
- Wrote and submitted to the school newspaper articles on teen pregnancy and pregnancy and STI prevention
- Engaged their communities of faith to participate in LTM.

### IDEAS FOR ACTIVITIES BY AND FOR YOUTH

Here are some activities that youth have created and implemented in their communities during Let's Talk Month. Youth have:

- Hosted a rap session for friends
- Hosted a bulletin board where youth can ask sexual health questions and get accurate answers
- Operated a sexual health related Web site with support from a responsible sexual health organization

Remember that youth can do anything that adults can do and that these ideas are only a tiny part of the things youth have done and can do during October to promote pregnancy prevention in their communities. Please let Advocates for Youth know about youth-led activities in your community.

## Chapter III. Working with Media: Involving Media in Let's Talk Month

Media coverage is important to promoting the messages of LTM because the media can carry your message to a much larger number of people than you can reach without media. Luckily, adolescent sexuality always attracts press attention. Unluckily, it is too often covered in a negative fashion, mirroring societal concepts of irresponsible, careless, or “bad” young people. Given society’s general discomfort with adolescent sexuality, media coverage of the issue can fail to explore complicated and interrelated aspects of teens’ health. It can be challenging to get media to pay attention to the roles of poverty, discrimination, lack of accurate information, lack of access to confidential and affordable health care, stereotypes, and adults’ negativity as important factors in adolescent sexual health outcomes.

The media usually welcome opportunities to report on issues related to children and adolescents. Consider media and new media as key players in the promotion of LTM programs and activities. Invite the media to all events and inform reporters about new research, etc. Media interest and support can range from airing local programs or public service announcements (PSAs) to printing a calendar of events in local newspapers. Public access cable channels may be willing to show educational programs or to film public forums on issues related to parent-child communication. Public relations and advertising firms can contribute significantly by promoting LTM through *pro Bono* work.

The media committee can involve the press in publicizing the events and activities of LTM. Successful media plans usually follow a four-step process:

- 1. Informing press**—Appoint a spokesperson to deal with press inquiries and to respond to reporters’ questions. Be aware of media coverage of related issues (such as HIV and other STIs, adolescent

development, etc). Know which papers and television and radio stations provide good coverage. Maintain lists of local and national news outlets, including reporters, editors, and news desks. Keep accurate mailing, telephone, e-mail, and fax lists for reporters in your area.

- 2. Setting press events**—Decide what press activities to hold and which materials to have on hand as background or current information. Consider sending out press releases, creating press packets, and holding a press conference. You may want to provide examples of past coverage in briefing packets.

- 3. Evaluating the press campaign**—Keep track of coverage and determine how the story was presented, who was quoted, and what kind of follow-up was necessary.

- 4. Follow-up with press, radio and TV stations**—Thank reporters and stations for story lines about teen pregnancy, broadcasting of PSAs, etc.

### THE SPOKESPERSON AND THE INTERVIEW

**The Spokesperson**—Press calls should be routed to a designated spokesperson(s) who can establish regular contact with the reporter, answer her/his questions, and provide follow-up. The spokesperson must be articulate and knowledgeable on issues related to adolescent health and pregnancy prevention. He/she should be able to speak clearly and directly to the issue without using jargon or technical terms. The spokesperson can also set up interviews between the reporter and others who can speak for attribution on behalf of LTM efforts.

Train youth to be spokespeople. Work with them to create talking points, data and “sound bites” they will use when talking with the media. Practice with them on giving media interviews. Give them the same

support, training, and encouragement that you provide to adult spokespeople. Train parents to be spokespeople, work with them to create talking points, use data and create “sound bites” they will use when talking with the media.

**The Interview**—*When you don’t know the answer, say so.* If the spokesperson does not know the answer to a question, it is important that she/he says so. Reporters have the right to ask any question; they may also use any answer given them, no matter how silly or incorrect. Reporters expect the spokesperson to answer to the best of her/his knowledge.

The spokesperson or respondent has the right not to answer questions that are inappropriate or off topic. Remember that reporters can use any remarks made to them. If the spokesperson doesn’t want something published, he/she must not say it. If she/he doesn’t want to be quoted on a particular topic, **the only safe rule is do not talk about it.** It is also important not to be drawn into criticizing colleagues or other organizations; criticism should be reserved for inadequate programs and poor policies.

### THE STORY

The spokesperson and the media committee should plan *in advance* what points to make and how to make them succinctly when responding to a reporter or in an interview. Anticipate difficult questions and practice answering them in advance. Focus on two to three points, and stress these points in the conversation or interview. Short snappy sentences (10 to 15 words) provide “sound bites” which make it easy for the media to quote you accurately and to convey your point(s).

### THE PRESS INFORMATION PACKET

The press information packet, pulled together for conferences or briefings, contains basic background material on the issues and activities of LTM as well as press releases or advisories. A standard packet includes:

- Materials related specifically to the press conference, such as graphs, charts, news release, and copies of speeches or testimony to be delivered at the conference;

- Contact information for the press spokesperson and the LTM coordinator;
- A background sheet on rates of teen pregnancy, births, and abortion as well as STI and/or teen sexual activity rates. (Visit [www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org) for a variety of fact sheets);
- Brief information about LTM, including sponsors and committee members, a statement of purpose and goals, and a brief summary of LTM activities across the country;
- Information on how LTM addresses a need in the community; and
- One or two items of previous favorable press coverage of LTM.

### WHEN THE PRESS CALLS

Direct the calls to the spokesperson or, in her absence, to members of the media committee.

- The spokesperson will either respond to the inquiry or refer the reporter to an appropriate person for additional information or an interview.
- Respond to all media calls. Don’t avoid press calls. Leaving a no comment” impression may arouse suspicion. Responding quickly will increase the chances of being quoted and cited in the final story. Practice making your one or two points before returning the reporter’s call.

Be wary of “sensationalist” journalists, those who have opposed your program, or those who work for newspapers with an editorial position against it. Think about whether to work with these journalists before they call; you may decide not to give interviews to these reporters and/or media outlets.

### WHEN CONTACTING THE MEDIA

Develop a press list, including contact information for reporters with different beats, such as community and health reporters. Your press list should contain the television, radio, and newspaper outlets in your area, including university papers, community and regional newspapers, radio and television stations, regional magazines, and military press officers.

Learn the deadlines for the media outlets on your press list and research the demographics of their primary audience(s), such as local citizens, sports fans, teens, etc. To be most effective in dealing with the press, also research the contacts for your calls and materials. Regarding:

- **Newspapers and Magazines**—Contact the metro or city desk. Request a health beat reporter. Beat reporters are often best to work with because they may be experts in their area.
- **Television**—Start with the assignment desk. TV public service directors and editorial directors are good contacts too, particularly for public affairs programming. Sometimes, correspondents participate in deciding which stories to cover.
- **Radio**—Identify news directors and talk show producers. Shows with a primary audience of teens may be particularly good for coverage.
- **New Media:** See box at right

## MEDIA ACTIVITIES

The media committee can help answer reporters' questions about the initiative. It can also develop:

- **News Releases**—A news release is normally one page, (maximum 300 to 400 words) that tells What, Who, Where, When, and Why regarding an event, program, or activity. It can stand alone or be enclosed with additional materials and resources on LTM. A news release should be distributed with sufficient lead time to permit reporters to plan on attending. A news release should also include one or two quotes from spokespeople, the date for release of the information, and contact name and telephone number. Distribute a news release by fax and by messenger.
- **News Advisory**—A news advisory announces an event or a specific news item. It is a one-page document that invites coverage. Answer the questions of What, Who, When, Where, and Why. Fax the advisory to contacts one to two days prior to the event.
- **News Briefing and Press Conference**—Briefings should be reserved for information that cannot be communicated well

## SPECIAL FOCUS: NEW MEDIA

### Use New Media to reach as many people as possible!

Online social networking and content creation tools provide many opportunities to spread awareness of your issues and recruit for your events. Here are a few easy steps.

- *Start a discussion.* If your community or school has a blog or online bulletin board or if there is a blog or community you know everyone reads, open up a discussion about international family planning issues.
- *Make a Facebook event and distribute it widely.* Encourage your friends to send the event around too.
- *Send a text message blast.* Got your life in your phone? Why not use text messaging to let everyone know about your event?
- *Advertise on Facebook.* If your organization has little as \$25 to spare, you can place an advertisement on Facebook that is tailored to your campus or community.
- *Use email.* Don't forget this reliable tool for contacting large numbers of people at a time.
- *Post on your campus, community, or local newspaper website.* Many schools and communities have event postings on their websites, and they are often free!
- *Create a fun video and post it on YouTube.*
- *Don't forget to tweet it!*

Remember: Distribution is key. Keep putting the word out to as many outlets as possible and urge your contacts to share it as well.

in a press release. Schedule the briefing to last about one-half hour; best hours are between 10 am and 2 pm. Use a location convenient to the reporters such as a press club or downtown site. Have LTM press kits available at the event and designate someone from the steering committee to greet reporters at the door.

- **Public Service Announcement (PSA)**—PSAs are a good way to publicize events. For radio, write a 15 to 20 second statement or announcement and submit it by fax or mail to the station's PSA contact. Television PSAs need to be produced; but the only cost is for production, not distribution. Many newspapers will print information from PSAs in the community calendar and announcements section.
- **Local Cable Access Programming**—Cable access channels offer access to equipment, air time, and consulting; these are an excellent venue for local issues. Often cable channels will film public forums or

debates or air PSAs and/or panel discussions. Contact the local cable company for more information.

- **Letters to the Editor**—One of newspapers' most frequently read sections is "Letters to the Editor." These letters must address an issue or column that was featured in the news very recently. This section is a good place to respond to criticism or concerns that have been raised in the community about LTM. Letters should be persuasive, brief, and quote reputable sources. A prominent member of the community could be asked either to write or to sign a letter regarding LTM.
- **Guest Editorials**—Guest editorials, or -op-eds," are brief opinion pieces or essays on topics in the news that appear opposite to the editorial page. Op-eds should be approximately 500 to 700 words and make one major point, backed up by reputable statistics and compelling anecdotes. As with letters to the editor, consider asking a prominent member of the community to write an op-ed or to sign one drafted by a member of LTM.
- **Regular Contact with Media Professionals**—Maintain press contacts through phone conversations or brief letters to reporters, editors, talk show producers, prominent community bloggers, and editorial boards. Suggest interviews or topics for press consideration; acknowledge good coverage of an issue; praise a reporter or editor's work.

- **Appearances on TV or Radio**—TV and radio stations often feature community members commenting on current events. Members of the LTM steering committee might call or send information suggesting appropriate guests for a specific show. Once you or another LTM colleague is invited onto a show, research the other guests' views. Plan to make your own case more compelling by using stories as well as facts to illustrate your points. Practice speaking in short, crisp sentences. It's hard to provide background in a television or radio interview than for print media, so assume the audience has no prior knowledge when you make your case. For television, wear bright, solid colors and avoid glasses.
- **Buying Space or Time**—You can buy space for a prepared advertisement in local newspapers, magazines, and websites. Newspapers and magazines have rate cards that explain ad prices by the size of the ad. Buying time for radio advertising is relatively inexpensive. Check with local stations for rates, type of audience, and technical requirements for advertisements. Some stations allow radio personalities to read ad copy on the air; others only air advertisements that have been produced on tape.

Adapted from Flinn S. Education & media campaigns. Advocacy Kit. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, '1997. Online at <http://www.advocatestbryouth.org/publications/advocacykitodf>

**SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Phone: 202.555.5555

CONTACT: Jane Smith

## October Is Let's Talk Month

*Advocates for Youth Sponsors Local Workshop on Talking with Your Kids about Sex!*

**Let's Talk Month (LTM)** is an opportunity for parents and children to learn to communicate in an open honest manner about sexuality and other sensitive issues. Such discussions can help young people delay sex and avoid unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Research shows that adolescents prefer their parents to be their sex educators. Moreover, teens often need more information, guidance, and open discussions with their families.

Families can play a pivotal role in helping young people make healthy decisions about sex. Most parents want the opportunity to share their values and provide their children with accurate information about sexuality. But often, parents and other adults feel uncomfortable discussing sexuality. Often, they need assistance and support in starting meaningful conversations.

Advocates for Youth is sponsoring a workshop for parents in the Washington metropolitan area:

What: How to Talk With Your Children about Sex

When: Saturday, October 5th at 10:00am

Where: Town Hall, Fifth and Main Street, Room 501

Who's Invited: Parents, Grandparents, Foster Parents, and Other Caregivers!

Reservations Required: Contact Advocates for Youth at 202.555.5555 and ask to speak to the Director of Education and Outreach

The workshop will offer parents and other caregivers practical advice on communication with young people about sex. In addition, participants will have the opportunity to identify areas for individual assistance, practice skills, and craft a plan for starting conversations about sex with their children.

\* For more information, press should contact Advocates' Press Secretary, John Smith at 202-555.5555, x180.

## SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EDITORIALS

- October is Let's Talk Month in \_\_\_\_\_ (county). Let's Talk Month is a national campaign to encourage parents and children to communicate about sexuality. Many issues of concern to parents and youth are being addressed by local agencies and organizations, schools, churches and synagogues throughout the community this month. Don't miss out! Take this opportunity to talk to your parent or young person today! For more information, call...
- Understanding sexuality is a lifelong process. Young people have many questions. Are you an askable parent? October is Let's Talk Month. Become askable! For more information, call...
- Learning to talk about sex with your kids isn't always easy. They seem to ask questions at the wrong time and wrong places. But now is the right time for you to be an askable parent—learn and share what you learn with your child. October is, Let's Talk Month, and your local coalition for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy can help. Call...
- October is Let's Talk Month, a time to promote the ideal that parents and future parents should be among the primary sexuality educators of their children. Support efforts in your community to prepare yourself for this responsibility. For more information. contact...
- October is Let's Talk Month. The best time to talk to your kids about sex is now. Be askable. Let your kids know they can talk to you—anytime! Call...
- October is Let's Talk Month. The best place to talk to your kids about sex is your place. Parents: Talk to your kids about sex—today! We can help you. Call...
- October is Let's Talk Month. Sex education belongs in the home, school, church and synagogue. Youth programs can help, too. Talk to your kids about sex, For materials and help, call...
- Parents: It's Time to Talk ... About Sex. Some tips on talking your preteen or teen about sex are:
  1. Try to answer what's being asked, not what you think is being asked.
  2. If you really do sense there is a question behind the question, go ahead and carefully try to give your emotional support.
  3. Try to be aware of your own attitudes.
  4. Try to convey that you believe in your child and you're more concerned about his/her quality of life and relationships with others rather than what they have done.
  5. Use humor but don't laugh at your kids.
- Would you like to tell your child the facts of life, but feel you don't have all the facts? We encourage you to talk with your child, especially during Let's Talk Month. For more information, call...
- October is Let's Talk Month. Each October \_\_\_\_\_ (sponsoring agency) coordinates a month-long schedule of community activities aimed at encouraging and supporting family communication about sexuality. These activities, sponsored by various community agencies are usually targeted at parents and adolescents to encourage parents to talk to their adolescent children about the many sensitive issues confronting young people today. These issues may include school concerns, friendship and dating, family issues, sexuality, alcohol and drug use, and other related issues. \_\_\_\_\_ distributes a calendar of events for Let's Talk Month. For more information, call...
- Today, October 1, is the kick-off for Let's Talk Month coordinated by \_\_\_\_\_. Let's Talk Month is promoted and foster positive communication between parents and teens about sexuality. Be sure to pick up one of the Let's Talk Month calendars now available. This calendar provides information on community events which help parents and teens become more comfortable communicating with each other. Let's Talk. For more information, call ...
- October is national Let's Talk Month...a time to promote parent and child communication and community about sexuality. Parents are among the primary sexuality educators of their children. Learn how to be an askable parent and talk to your children about sex. For more information and a list of Let's Talk programs, call

# Chapter IV. Sample Forms

This chapter includes sample forms for the LTM coordinating organization or agency to send to others. Feel free to use and/or adapt these forms or to design something entirely different. These sample forms follow:

- **Sample A: Let's Talk Month Invitation Form**—Send this invitation, asking others to participate in LTM.
- **Sample B: Letter Asking Agencies to Co-Sponsor LTM**—Send this invitation, along with Invitation A, inviting others to become co-sponsors of LTM. Follow up with personal telephone calls to the organization's executive director if your first attempts to recruit co-sponsors and/or participants are unsuccessful
- **Sample C: LTM Agency Participation Form for the Community Calendar**—Send this form to all organizations that offer LTM activities; ask them to complete one form

for each activity offered and to return the forms to the LTM coordinator so that their activities can appear on the community calendar. Information from these forms will also help establish the “big picture” of all LTM events during October, and provide an outline for publicity regarding the event(s).

- **Sample D: LTM Final Report Form for Participating Organizations**—This is an invaluable asset for designing future LTM campaigns, providing a list of next year's probable participants and helping to identify any gaps that should be filled in the following year. Send this form to all participants toward the end of October. If participants do not return the form, provide them with another copy when you send them a letter of thanks for their participation. Stress the importance of their returning the form.

### **SAMPLE A: LET'S TALK MONTH INVITATION FORM (FROM THE COORDINATING ORGANIZATION)**

To: \_\_\_\_\_ *[Community or State Agencies, Organizations, Religious Institutions, and/or Schools]*

From: \_\_\_\_\_ *[State or Local Let's Talk Month Coordinator]*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ *[Date]*

Re: Let's Talk Month, October \_\_\_\_ *[Year]*

Join us in planning for Let's Talk Month in \_\_\_\_\_ *[County/State].*

*(or)*

For the past \_\_\_\_\_ *[# of Years]* years, we have coordinated Let's Talk Month in \_\_\_\_\_ *[County/State].*

The purpose of Let's Talk Month (LTM) is to support parents/caregivers in providing information about sex to young people. To that end, community and/or state institutions, such as PTAs, religious organizations, schools, clubs, and health agencies sponsor special activities which increase public awareness of the need for positive and healthy communication about sex in families. Let's Talk Month emphasizes the importance of strong partnerships between community and families in helping young people to make healthy, values-based decisions that promote achievement and avoid sexual risk behaviors.

All participating organizations, agencies, and groups will receive prominent listing on calendar of activities (to be widely distributed throughout the community/state) and in local print media. A member of the Steering Committee will contact you within the next few weeks to discuss your participation in this coming October's activities.

Thank you for your interest and support. We look forward to your participation.

\_\_\_\_\_ *[LTM Coordinating Organization]*

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Chair]*

\_\_\_\_\_ *[Email]*

*Adapt this letter and send out with the forms that follow.*

**SAMPLE B: LETTER ASKING AGENCIES TO CO-SPONSOR LTM**

To: Family & Youth Services Organizations

From: \_\_\_\_\_ [LTM Coordinator]

This year, \_\_\_\_\_ [your organization] will coordinate Let's Talk Month (LTM). We are encouraging communities, agencies, and faith communities to plan activities and programs and to develop resources that support parents and other core groups to talk with young people about sex. We would like to invite you to become a co-sponsor for LTM, October \_\_\_\_\_ [Year].

Co-sponsorship means that your organization will be listed on all LTM materials distributed state- or community- wide. As a cosponsor, your organization will plan and implement activities that involve your members in LTM.

LTM Co-sponsor: Please respond by March 15, \_\_\_\_\_ [Year].

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, we would like to be listed as co-sponsor of Let's Talk Month, October \_\_\_\_\_ [Year].

\_\_\_\_\_ We are considering your invitation to become a co-sponsor of Let's Talk Month, October \_\_\_\_\_ [Year].

\_\_\_\_\_ We will notify you by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ No, we do not wish to be listed as a co-sponsor of Let's Talk Month, October \_\_\_\_\_ [Year].

Your organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail, fax, or adapt to email and return by March 15 to:

\_\_\_\_\_ [Your State or Local LTM Coordinator]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Address]

\_\_\_\_\_ [City, State, Zip Code]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Email]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Fax Number]

### **SAMPLE C: LTM AGENCY PARTICIPATION FORM (FOR THE COMMUNITY CALENDAR AND MEDIA EFFORTS)**

**Please fill out a separate form for each activity you will hold during LTM.**

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years offering LTM activities: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 \_\_\_\_\_ (other)

Activity/Program:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Time(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Who should attend: \_\_\_\_\_

Open to public: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Reservation or registration required: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief synopsis of program/activity:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to be listed on the LTM Community Calendar? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Please return by: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:

\_\_\_\_\_ [LTM Coordinator]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Address]

\_\_\_\_\_ [City] \_\_\_\_\_ [State] \_\_\_\_\_ [Zip Code]

[or adapt for email return]

Do you wish to be listed as a cosponsor of Let's Talk Month? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Agencies offering LTM programs should fill out one form for each activity offered during LTM and return to the LTM coordinator.

#### **SAMPLE D: LTM FINAL REPORT FORM (FOR PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS)**

Please answer the following questions and return this form to the LTM Coordinator for each event or activity you offer.

1. Your organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Your presentation/activity/program: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Adults

3. Would you be interested in participating in LTM next year? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. Would you repeat the program you did this year? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

5. What suggestions do you have for the LTM Coordinator for next year as far as coordinating Let's Talk Month?

---



---



---

6. Please send us two examples of your handouts, printed materials, or resources used in your activity. One copy will go to Advocates for Youth, national sponsor of LTM, and may be included in the next *National Let's Talk Month Planning Guidebook*.

7. Let's Talk Month Coordinator:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return by: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to:

\_\_\_\_\_ [LTM Coordinator]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Address]

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [Email]

**Did you do any of the following?**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>_____ Billboards (number of billboards put up)</p> <p>_____ Bumper stickers</p> <p>_____ Buttons/stickers</p> <p>_____ Calendar of events (number of calendars printed)</p> <p>_____ Community-wide conference or forum (_____ number of forums and _____ number who attended)</p> <p>_____ Essay contest</p> <p>_____ Film festival</p> <p>_____ Library display/bibliography</p> <p>_____ Lunch time seminars for parents</p> <p>_____ Newspaper editorials</p> <p>_____ Newspaper interviews/stories (number of interviews/stories)</p> <p>_____ Poster contest/teens</p> <p>_____ Posters</p> <p>_____ Proclamation by the mayor and/or commissioner/governor</p> <p>_____ Professional training programs</p> <p>_____ Radio PSAs (_____ number of and names of stations who aired PSAs)</p> <p>_____ Rap/hip hop contest</p> <p>_____ Teen awards</p> <p>_____ Teen conference</p> <p>_____ Teen health fair</p> | <p>_____ Television PSAs (_____) number of channels airing PSAs and _____ names of channels airing PSAs)</p> <p>_____ TV/radio talk shows (____)</p> <p>_____ Number of workshops, seminars, and presentations for parents and youth (Number of workshops offered and number who attended)</p> <p>_____ Churches</p> <p>_____ Community organizations</p> <p>_____ Day care centers</p> <p>_____ Health departments</p> <p>_____ Hospitals</p> <p>_____ Parent organizations</p> <p>_____ Physicians</p> <p>_____ Pregnancy centers</p> <p>_____ Schools</p> <p>_____ Youth agencies</p> <p>_____ Other _____</p> <p>_____ Other activities (Please list.)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> |
|--|--|

**Please return this form and one copy of all Let's Talk Month materials and publications to Advocates for Youth by December 31st.**

**Thank you.**

# Chapter V: Worksheets and Handouts for Facilitators

## Characteristics of Parents of Sexually Healthy Adolescents

- Demonstrate value, respect, acceptance and trust in their adolescent children.
- Model sexually health attitudes in their ownrelationships.
- Maintain non-punitive stance towards sexuality.
- Are knowledgeable about sexuality.
- Discuss sexuality with their children.
- Provide information on sexuality to their children.
- Seek appropriate guidance and information as needed.
- Try to understand their adolescent's point of view.
- Help adolescents gain understanding of values.
- Set and maintain limits for dating and other activities outside of school.
- Stay actively involved in the young person's life.
- Ask questions about friends and romantic partners.
- Provide a supportive and safe environment for their children.
- Offer to assist adolescents in accessing health care services.
- Help them plan for their future.

From Facing Facts: Sexual Health for America's Adolescents. SIECUS, New York, NY: 1995.

## I'm an Askable Parent ...

- \_\_\_\_\_ I will listen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will start discussions about sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will listen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will educate myself about sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will listen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will share my values about sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will listen.
- \_\_\_\_\_ No matter what choices they make, I will always be there for my children.



---

*Signature*

*Date*

## Contract for Parent/Guardian-Child Communication

### We Believe:

- That parents are the first and one of the most important influences on a young person's sexuality
- That youth want their parents to talk with them about sexuality and sexual health.
- That information is essential to make good decisions.
- That deciding not to have sex is a positive, reasonable decision and if sexually active using contraception and condoms is a responsible choice.
- That communication between parents or caregivers and youth about sexuality makes decision making easier.
- That \_\_\_\_\_
- That \_\_\_\_\_

### Therefore:

- Adults must answer questions with accurate and honest information.
- Youth must seek information from parents and trust them as reliable sources.
- Parents and youth must respect each other's values and personal decisions.
- Both parents and their children must make sincere efforts to keep doors of communication open.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Youth's Signature and Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adult's Signature and Date

For more information on adolescent sexuality issues and parent education, contact:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **1. Try not to criticize or mock a child. Avoid:**

- Labeling (“Don’t be such a baby.”)
- Personal Attacks (“You are so lazy.”)
- Sarcasm (“Thanks a lot for nothing.”)
- Put Downs (“You are so clumsy. Why don’t you watch what you’re doing.”)

### **2. Find yourself doing one-way communication? Avoid:**

- Commands (“How many times do I have to tell you this?”)
- Threats (“If you don’t shape up, you’ll be sorry.”)
- Sermons (“If I’ve told you once, I’ve told you a thousand times...”)

### **3. Taking a youth’s problems too lightly? Avoid:**

- “Cheer up! It can’t be that bad.”
- “You’ll forget all about it by next week.”
- “There’s no point dwelling on it.”
- “Think you have it tough? Why when I was your age...”
- “If your friends told you to jump off a bridge...”

### **4. Find yourself giving too much advice?**

- Listen, Listen, Listen
- Ask if they want your advice

**Of course, adults are only human. If you find yourself slamming shut the door to good communication try to:**

- Take a deep breath and start over!
- Listen to what a child is really saying and use the communication tips you know work.
- Apologize when you say something hurtful, untrue or unkind out of anger.
- Ask your child how your words made him/her feel and take responsibility for the hurt you may have caused.

## Talking with Your Children about Sex: Why Do I Need To?

Because your children love you and want you to talk with them about sexuality.

Because you love your children and want them to grow up to be healthy and positive about close intimate relationships.

Because you are their first and most important sexuality educator. It starts with the closeness of touch and meeting their needs as infants and is a life-long process.

Because your children *will* get sexuality information from many places in addition to their home. It's your job to interpret, affirm or correct those other sources and influences.

Because values are caught, not taught and you are the pitcher. Your expressions, tone of voice, posture—all send messages to your child about sexuality.

Because young people deserve the facts and honest answers from responsible and caring adults, namely, their parents.

Because when young people hear the facts presented in a loving, non-judgmental way and are empowered to utilize good decision-making skills, they are better able to avoid sexual exploitation, manipulation and negative peer influences.

Because when parents communicate with their children and respect their normal developmental progress toward independence and adulthood, they strengthen the parent-child relationship.

Because young people will get many messages about sexuality from the media, their peers and other places but *want* to talk with their parents.

## Talking With Your Children about Sex: Why Is It So Hard to Talk about Sex?

43

- T F Some parents did not grow up in an environment where parent/child sexuality discussions occurred.
- T F Some parents are afraid they don't know the "right" answers.
- T F Some parents are afraid that if they talk about sex, it will encourage their children to experiment.
- T F Some parents don't know what is appropriate to talk about at what age.
- T F Some parents are uncomfortable with the idea that the child is a sexual being.
- T F Some parents don't think their children should know anything about sex.
- T F Some parents are embarrassed and uncomfortable.
- T F Some parents believe their children get a comprehensive, complete sexuality education at school and so they don't have to say or do anything.
- T F Some parents don't know when and how to start.
- T F Some parents are afraid of answering personal questions about their own behavior.
- T F Some parents are afraid to learn that their children might not share their values and beliefs.

The answer to all the above statements is T (true). But, your children need and want you to talk with them about sexuality. Don't let any of these keep you from discussing sexuality with your children.

## What Children Should Know about Human Sexuality

### By age five, the child should:

1. Use correct terms for all sexual body parts, including the reproductive organs.
2. Be able to understand the concepts of “maleness” and “femaleness.”
3. Understand that their bodies belong to themselves and that they have a right to say no to unwanted touch.
4. Understand that a woman does not have to have babies unless she wants to.
5. Know where babies come from, use appropriate language.
6. Be able to talk about body parts without a sense of “naughtiness.”
7. Be able to ask trusted adults questions about sexuality.
8. Know that “sex talk” is for private times at home.

### Elementary School Children (ages 6-9) should:

1. Begin a study of growth and reproduction in animals and plants—be aware of their needs and the responsibility of caring for them.
2. Have an awareness of the life cycle, including sexuality at all ages.
3. Have and use an acceptable vocabulary for communication about body parts, their own and those of the opposite sex.
4. Have a grasp of different types of families.
5. Be able to identify family roles and responsibilities.
6. Begin to be aware of non-stereotyped gender roles.
7. Become familiar with the health care system, viewing it as non-frightening and supportive of their health and well-being.
8. Take an active role in managing their body’s health and safety.
9. Be able to develop and maintain friendships.

### Nine- to 13-year-olds (in addition to developing earlier skills) should:

1. Understand human reproduction, including:
  - a. Human sexuality as a natural part of life
  - b. The legitimacy and normalcy of sexual feelings.
  - c. The idea that sex is pleasurable as well as the way to make a baby—the realization that sexual acts can be separated from reproductive acts.
  - d. The biological components of the reproductive cycle including the probability of pregnancy with unprotected intercourse.
  - e. How male and female bodies grow and differ.
2. Understand the uses and types of contraception:
  - a. It is possible to plan parenthood.
  - b. Having a child is a long-term responsibility, and that every child deserves mature, responsible, loving parents.

3. Understand the changes they can expect to begin in their bodies before puberty
  - a. Range of times at which normal development begins—including normal differences in male and female timing of these events.
  - b. The general stages that bodies grow through.
  - c. Menstruation and wet dreams.
4. Be able to protect themselves against potential sexual abuse and how to react to such dangers.
5. Understand how to be a good friend and how to end a relationship without anger.
6. Understand the purposes and considerations of dating—awareness of potential for damage in exploitative relationships.
7. Recognize of the ways in which behavior can be interpreted as sexual, and how to deal with such interpretation (by 12-13). Recognition of male and female prostitution and its dangers.
8. Be aware of appropriate roles for young men and women—an awareness of the differences between biological sex and socially assigned gender roles.
9. Know how sexually transmitted infections are transmitted and treated.
10. Have knowledge of the relationships among family members and how families fit into society.

**Fourteen- to 18-year-olds (in addition to developing previously listed skills) should:**

1. Be knowledgeable about human sexuality:
  - a. Recognize the impact of media presentations which push for sexual involvement.
  - b. Understand differences in sexuality including homosexuality, celibacy, and marriage.
  - c. Have an articulated value system about interpersonal relations, including sexual behavior.
  - d. Know contraceptive alternatives and the causes and treatments of sexually transmitted infections.
2. Understand social pressures and have a demonstrated awareness of the potential consequences of casual sexual relationships.
3. Understand personal relationships:
  - a. Understand they have a right not to have sexual relations.
  - b. Be able to have and maintain friends.
  - c. Be able to identify expectations of marriage, e.g., emotional support, companionship, child rearing.
  - d. Have information on changing relationships in families over time.
  - e. Be aware of the mixture of independence and responsibility needed at their age.
4. Receive education for parenthood:
  - a. Be able to demonstrate knowledge of the stages of gestation.
  - b. Know the basics of child care and child development, including sexual development.
  - c. Demonstrate knowledge of the responsibilities of parenthood.
  - d. Discuss how they believe children should be raised.

Adapted with permission from Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

## Helpful Hints for Communicating about Sex and Sexuality

**Children Learn By Observation:** Actions speak louder than words. Set good examples that show kids how your life is enriched by your values. “Do as I say, not as I do” sends a confusing message to young people.

**Normalize:** Reassure them that they’re normal.

**Build Their Self-Esteem:** Credit them for their talents, personalities, and accomplishments. Remind them frequently that they are capable and lovable.

**Do Not Pry:** Respect your children’s privacy as much as you value your own.

**Language Is Important:** Use correct names for sex organs and sexual behaviors. Practice saying them out loud or in front of a mirror if you are embarrassed.

**Use Teachable Moments:** Take advantage of “teachable moments.” A friend’s pregnancy, neighborhood gossip, and TV shows can help start a conversation.

**Answer Questions Simply And Directly:** Give accurate, honest, short, and simple answers.

**Listen More Than You Talk:** Think about what else you’re being asked. For example, “How old do you have to be to do it?” might also mean, “I’m thinking about having sex. What should I do?” On the other hand, a question about sex doesn’t mean your daughter or son is having—or is thinking about having—sex. So, don’t jump to conclusions.

**Be Available:** Let your children know that you’re available, and make it a habit to talk about what you think and feel.

**Ask Questions:** Even if they don’t ask you questions, ask them about what they think and what they know.

**Be Honest:** Be clear and truthful about your own feelings and figure out what you want to say about them before you speak.

**Listen:** Find out where your kids are coming from, and what they know or have heard about a particular topic before answering a question. It can be helpful to have some context for your child’s curiosity.

**Be Gentle:** Use your children’s mistakes as positive opportunities for learning. It won’t help them learn if you criticize, nag, lecture, or shout.

**Keep the Lines of Communication Open:** Let your body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice support what you say with words.

**Learn Their World:** Get to know the world your children live in. What pressures are they feeling? What do they consider normal? What’s “cool”? If you show interest in their activities and friends, they’ll know you care and want to be a part of their lives.

**Be Patient:** Your children hear and learn about sexuality from lots of different sources. You will need to clarify, repeat and build on your child’s knowledge as she/he grows and matures. You can expect the same questions to recur.

**Learning about Sexuality Is a Life-Long Process:** Adults need to continue to learn, too. Talk seriously about sexuality with your spouse, close friends or health professionals. Find out if your church or synagogue will sponsor a discussion on faith and sexuality. Get pamphlets and information from your local health department, health provider, library, or Planned Parenthood.

**Keep Your Sense Of Humor:** But don’t laugh at your children.

### **Questions asked by preschoolers ages three to five include:**

- Will I have breasts (or a penis) like yours?
- How did I get into mommy's stomach?
- Why do you have a penis (or breasts) and I don't?
- Where do babies come from?
- How do babies get out of their mommy's tummy?
- Does it hurt to have a baby?

### **Questions asked by preteens ages six to 12 include:**

- How does a baby stay alive inside the mother?
- What does "have sexual intercourse" mean?
- What happens when girls menstruate?
- What is a wet dream?
- Why do kids say "dirty" words?
- Do boys have periods?
- Do girls have wet dreams?
- When will I develop like my friends?
- Why are some children adopted?
- What's a rubber (condom) for?
- How do you put on a condom?

### **Questions asked by teenagers ages 13 to 18 include:**

- Is it normal to masturbate? How much is normal'?
- How do you know if you're gay/lesbian?
- What is a homosexual?
- Are my breasts/penis too small?
- Is the pill safe?
- Can get birth control without my parents knowing about it?
- How can you tell if you have a sexually transmitted infection?
- Is there something wrong with me if I remain a virgin?
- How can you avoid pregnancy?
- How can I say "no"?
- How can I tell if I'm really in love?
- How can I know if I have an orgasm?
- Is sexual intercourse painful?
- Is oral sex normal?
- What about having sex with someone you are not in love with?
- How can I tell if I'm pregnant?

## Attitudes and Beliefs

Teens may fill out this worksheet and discuss their feelings in small groups. The facilitator may ask: What differences did you notice? What similarities?

### ... About Love

My mother would say \_\_\_\_\_

My father would say \_\_\_\_\_

I believe \_\_\_\_\_

### ... About Marriage

My mother would say \_\_\_\_\_

My father would say \_\_\_\_\_

I believe \_\_\_\_\_

### ... About Sex

My mother would say \_\_\_\_\_

My father would say \_\_\_\_\_

I believe \_\_\_\_\_

### ... About Birth Control

My mother would say \_\_\_\_\_

My father would say \_\_\_\_\_

I believe \_\_\_\_\_

### ... About Pregnancy

My mother would say \_\_\_\_\_

My father would say \_\_\_\_\_

I believe \_\_\_\_\_

## How Well Do You Know Your Parents?

You may live with your parents, spend hours a day with them, and talk with them a lot. Still, there's much you don't know about them. This activity will help to make you aware of how much—or how little—you know your parents.

**Directions:** Grab a pen and try to answer these questions about your parent(s). At the same time, your dad or mom will answer the questions in “How Well Do You Know Your Son or Daughter?” When you're both finished, exchange and discuss the answers with each other. If you only have one parent at home or live with another relative or adult, please just answer the questions that pertain to that adult.

1. How did your parents meet?
2. What color are your dad's eyes?
3. For a vacation, would your mom prefer a luxury resort, a rustic mountain cabin, resting at home, or somewhere else?
4. What presidential candidate did your dad vote for in 2008?
5. Does your mom believe in love at first sight?
6. Would your dad rather watch TV with the family, sit alone and read, or go out to dinner together with friends?
7. Does your mom gas up the car as soon as the tank is half empty or when the fuel is nearly gone?
8. Does your dad usually carry a photo of you in his wallet?
9. How old was your mom on her first date?
10. If your dad turned on the TV and found these choices, which would he pick: a football game, soap opera, old movie—or turn off the set?
11. Which of these can't your mom do: touch her toes, do a headstand, rewire a lamp, replace the spark plugs, sew a shirt?
12. What was your dad's first full-time job?
13. Who is your mom's closest friend?
14. What gift would your dad most like to receive?
15. If your mom could have you do anything for three hours, what would it be?

Summary: If you get more than 15 right, congratulations ... you really know your parent(s)! From 11 to 15? Not bad, but try to pay a little more attention. Fewer than 11? You need a crash course called “Mom and Dad 101.”

Remember: Knowing or wanting to find out about someone shows that you truly care.

*Adapted with permission from Family Health Council, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA.*

## How Well Do You Know Your Son or Daughter?

As a parent, you sometimes are so busy taking care of your children that you lose track of some of the details of their lives. This activity will help to make you aware of how much—or how little—you know about your sons or daughters.

**Directions:** With pen in hand, see how many of the following questions you can answer. Don't be surprised if you get stumped along the way. Ask your son or daughter at the same time to fill out the worksheet, "How Well Do You Know Your Parents'?" When you're both finished, exchange and discuss the answers with each other.

1. What is your daughter's/son's favorite game or sport?
2. What is your son's/daughter's height (within one inch)?
3. Who is your daughter's/son's closest friend?
4. If your son/daughter could do anything he/she chose for a day, what would it be?
5. What is your daughter's/son's favorite TV show? Favorite character?
6. What was the last movie your son/daughter saw?
7. What is your daughter's/son's favorite food?
8. What is your son's/daughter's favorite thing to do after school?
9. Would your daughter/son rather ride a bike, ride a horse, or drive a car?
10. Who is your son's/daughter's favorite singer or musical group?
11. If your daughter/son had a choice to have a pet, what would it be?
12. Which would your son/daughter rather do: wash dishes, mow the lawn, clean his/her room, or vacuum the house?
13. Do your daughter's/son's friends call her/him by a nickname? If so, what is it?
14. In the evening, would your son/daughter rather play a game with the family, go to visit a relative, or read in his/her room?
15. What was the last problem your daughter/son brought to you for help?
16. What gift would your son/daughter most like to receive?
17. What does your daughter/son do that she/he is proud of?

Summary: If you get more than 15 right, congratulations ... you really know your daughter/son! From 11 to 15? Not bad, but try to pay a little more attention. Fewer than 11? Better spend a little time catching up on what's new with her or him.

*Adapted with permission from Family Health Council, Inc., Pittsburgh, PA.*

Parents need to be clear of their own values regarding sexuality and share them with their children. Below are some statements about important issues. Circle the letter(s) you feel most nearly expresses your present beliefs toward the issue mentioned. If no choice expresses your thoughts, write your opinion after "other."

1. In my opinion, premarital sex:

- a. Is wrong under any circumstance; sex belongs in marriage.
- b. Is okay if the couple is engaged and plans to marry.
- c. Is okay provided each partner has some commitment and sense of caring and concern for the welfare of the other.
- d. Is okay under any mutually agreed upon circumstance.
- e. Is okay as long as they are responsible enough to use birth control.
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. I believe birth control by adolescents:

- a. Is always wrong.
- b. Should always be used if one is sexually active, unless a baby is wanted.
- c. Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. If an unwanted adolescent pregnancy were to occur in my family, I believe:

- a. The couple should marry and raise the baby on their own.
- b. She should have an abortion.
- c. She should have the baby and raise it alone.
- d. She or her parents should pay expenses.
- e. He should help pay for expenses.
- f. Her parents should help raise the baby.
- g. His parents should help raise the baby.
- h. The baby should be released for adoption.
- i. Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Sex education, in my opinion:

- a. Should be the responsibility of parents and family.
- b. Should be part of the school program.
- c. Should be available in the community.
- d. Belongs in the church's educational program.
- e. Should not be taught.
- f. Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. Regarding communication with my son or daughter about sex, I believe I should:

- a. Actively bring up sexual development, feelings, and behavior with my children, and encourage family discussion of sexual matters.
- b. Wait for my adolescent to raise questions or indicate readiness to talk and then answer as best I can.
- c. Make books and other information available.
- d. Encourage my adolescent to talk to others who would be good counselors, but not discuss the matter with him or her in very great detail myself.
- e. Not discuss sex with my adolescent at all; just let him or her know my beliefs by example.
- f. Not discuss sex with my adolescent, but simply state my feelings about what's right and wrong and demand they abide by my rules as long as they live under my roof
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Naming the Parts

**Purpose:** To increase knowledge of the male and female genitalia and reproductive systems

**Materials:** A copy of the *Female Genitals*, *Female Reproductive Organs*, and *Male Genitals and Reproductive Organs* handouts for each teen, enlarged illustrations of each handout, a copy of *Anatomy and Physiology of Reproduction* Leader's Resource, stapler, and pens/pencils

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Planning Notes:** Prepare enlarged illustrations of the male and female genitalia and reproductive organs for use in Step 4. If you have an overhead projector, you can create transparencies from the handouts. Review the *Anatomy and Physiology of Reproduction* Leader's Resource until you feel comfortable with the material. You do not have to be an expert on human reproduction to conduct this activity, but you need to be comfortable with the terminology, such as penis, vagina, anus, and sexual intercourse. Collate and staple the three handouts to create packets for each participant.

### Procedure:

1. Explain to the teens that you are going to give them a quiz to see how much they actually know about the female and male reproductive systems. Explain that no one will be graded on this quiz and that its purpose is to help the participants. Ask the group to work together in pairs. Go over the instructions for the activity:

- Fill in the blanks on all three handouts with the correct name of each body part.
- Do not worry about spelling.
- If you do not know the correct (medical) term for a body part, use the word(s) you know.

2. Give each teen a packet of handouts and tell the group to begin working.

3. After most of the teens have finished, display the enlarged illustration of the *Female*

*Genitals* handout. Add any missing information from the Leader's Resource. Be sure the following points are made:

- Explain that vulva is the correct term for the female external genitalia, even though it is not a familiar term to most people, including adults. Point out that some people believe harmful and negative myths about the female vulva—such as that it is dirty or ugly—and emphasize that these myths are not true. The vulva is a normal, healthy part of the female body, just like the penis and scrotum are normal, healthy parts of the male body.
- Go over the individual parts of the vulva, labeling and explaining each. Point out the following:
  - The clitoris is a highly sensitive part of a female's body. Its function is to provide sexual pleasure.
  - The vulva has two openings, each with its own function—the opening to the vagina and the opening to the urethra.
  - The anus is not part of the vulva.
  - A female can see this part of her body by holding a hand mirror between her legs.

4. Display the enlarged illustration of the *Female Reproductive Organs* handout. Ask for a volunteer to explain the female reproductive process, beginning with ovulation and ending with the menstrual period. Ask the group to assist if the volunteer runs into difficulty. Add any missing information from the Leader's Resource. Be sure the following points are made:

- When she is born, a female has thousands of egg cells in her ovaries. Together, these egg cells are called ova; one egg is called an ovum.
- During the years that females menstruate, they release only a small percentage of their ova.
- During puberty, a female's ovaries begin to release one ovum each month. Once that process has begun, a female is capable of becoming pregnant any time she has vaginal intercourse with a male partner.

- Conception occurs when a sperm cell fertilizes the ovum after it has left the ovary.

5. Display the enlarged illustration of the *Male Genitals and Reproductive Organs* handout. Ask for a second volunteer to explain the male reproductive process, beginning with sperm production and ending with ejaculation. Add any missing information from the Leader's Resource. Be sure the following points are made:

- A male is born with two round glands, called testicles, located in the lower part of his body, near his penis.
- The penis is a highly sensitive part of a male's body, especially the head of the penis, called the glans.
- The penis has one opening that performs more than one function—release of urine or release of sperm in seminal fluid.
- At maturity a male's testicles begin to produce and store millions of sperm cells.
- Sperm cells can only be produced at 96.6 degrees—two degrees below normal body temperature. The scrotum acts like a temperature gauge and draws the testicles closer to the body when it is cold or drops the testicles further from the body when it is hot to keep them at the right temperature for sperm production and storage.
- When a male ejaculates after his testicles have begun producing sperm, millions of sperm cells are released from his penis, along with other fluids.
- If ejaculation occurs inside a female's vagina or near its opening, sperm can swim up into the female's Fallopian tubes. If there is an ovum in the Fallopian

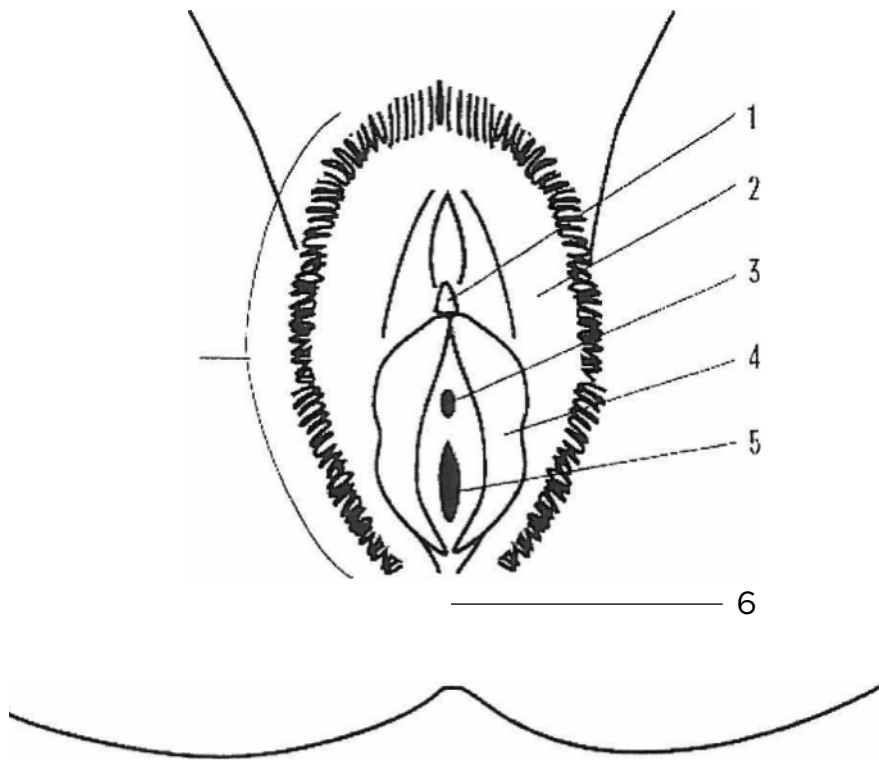
tube, conception occurs when the sperm fertilizes the egg cell.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Which parts of the male and female anatomy are the same or similar? (Possible answers: Both have a urethra and an anus; the clitoris and the glans are similar because they contain many nerve endings and are highly sensitive.)
2. Why do males generally feel more comfortable than females about their genitals? (Possible answer: Males can see their genitals and are taught to touch and handle their penis to urinate. Females cannot easily see their genitals and are often discouraged from touching them.)
3. Why is it important to feel comfortable touching your own genitals? (Possible answers: (a) Genitals are sources of erotic pleasure, and masturbation is a risk-free way of expressing and experiencing one's sexuality. (h) Males need to touch their testicles to feel for lumps that might be a sign of testicular cancer. (c) Females use tampons. (d) For both sexes, some methods of contraception require touching the genitals.)
4. Why is it important for teens to understand exactly how and when conception occurs? (Possible answers: (a) It is always important for teens to know how their bodies function, and how they can stay healthy and (b) Knowing exactly how and when conception occurs is necessary so that teens know how to prevent pregnancy, by abstaining from vaginal intercourse or by using effective contraception.)

Adapted from *Guide to Implementing TAP (Teens for AIDS Prevention): A Peer Education Program to Prevent HIV/STD Infection*. Washington, DC: Advocates for Youth, © 2002.

## Female Genitals



1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

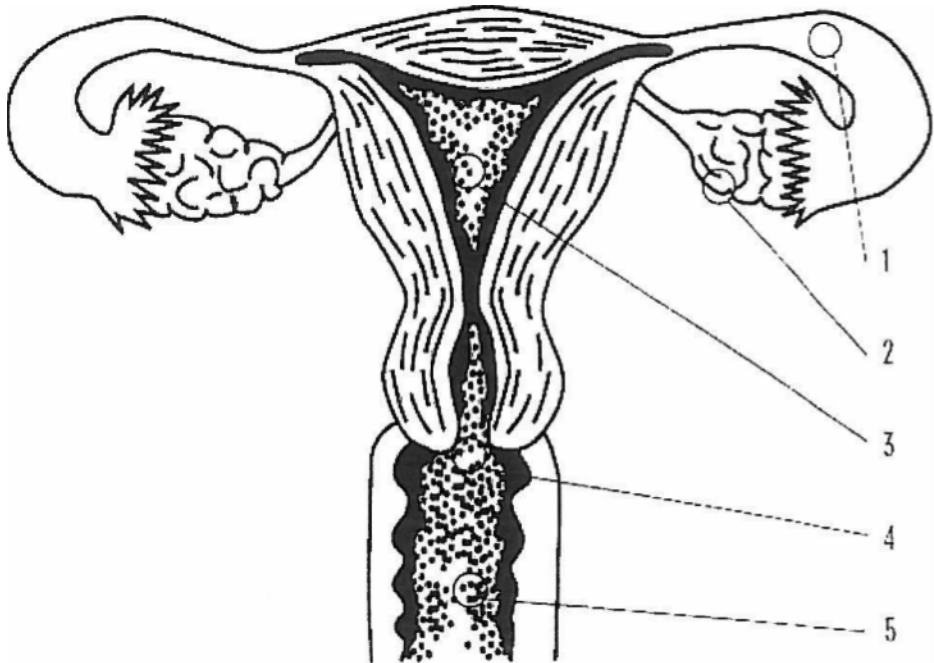
3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

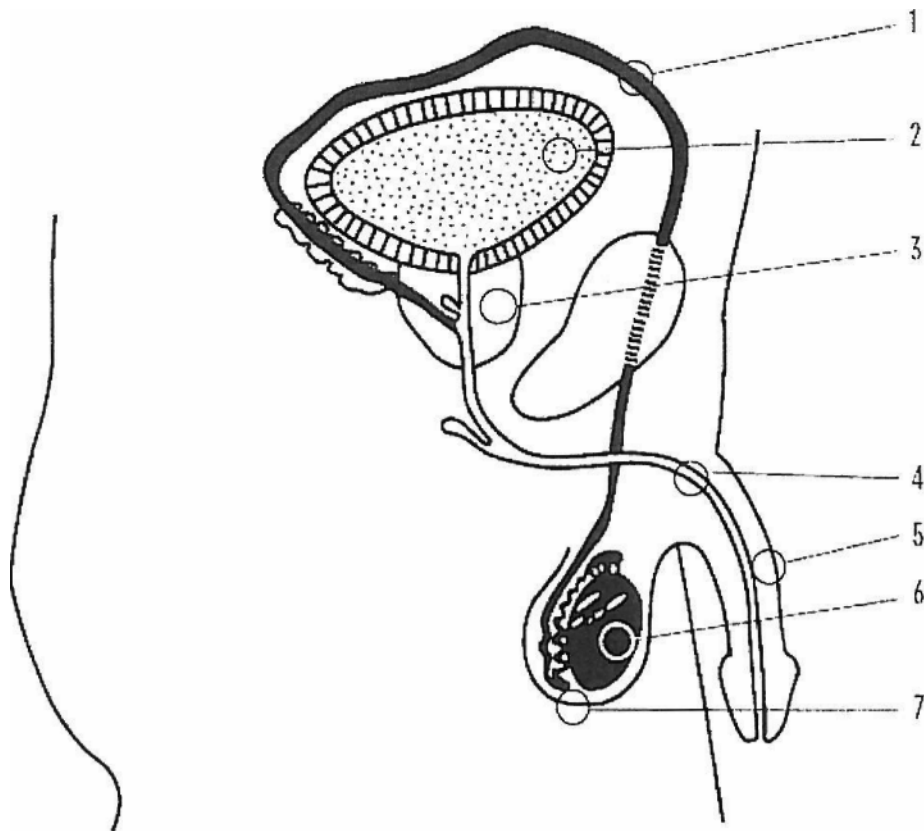
6. \_\_\_\_\_ (not part of the genitals)

Female Reproductive Organ



- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Male Genitals and Reproductive Organs

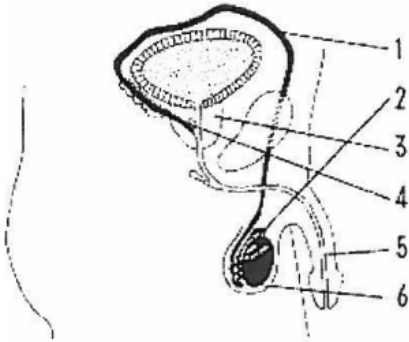


1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

## Naming the Parts Leader's Resource

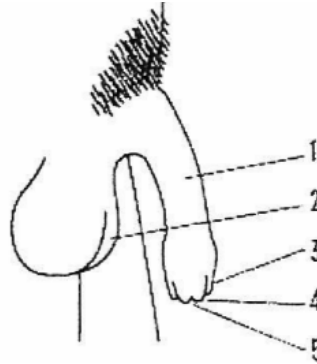
### Anatomy and Physiology of Reproduction

**Male — Internal**



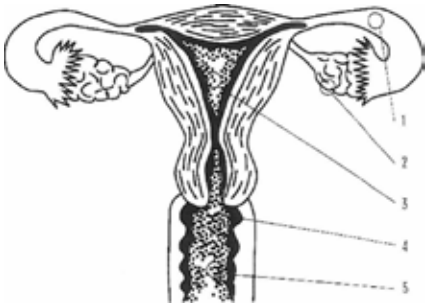
1. Vas deferens
2. Epididymis
3. Prostate gland
4. Seminal vesicles
5. Urethra
6. Testis

**Male — External**



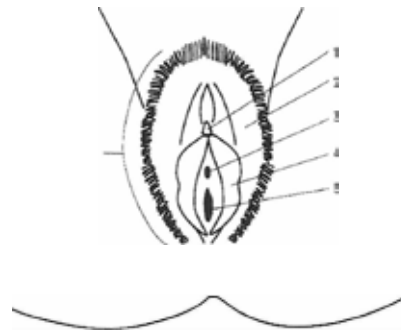
1. Penis
2. Scrotum
3. Foreskin
4. Glans
5. Opening to the urethra

**Female — Internal**



1. Fallopian tubes
2. Ovaries
3. Uterus (Womb)
4. Cervix
5. Vagina

**Female — External**



1. Vulva
2. Labia majora (outer lips)
3. Clitoris.
4. Opening to the urethra
5. Labia minora (inner lips)
6. Opening to the vagina
7. Anus (not part of the genitals)

# Chapter VI: Resources for Let's Talk Month

# Parent-Child Communication

## Promoting Sexually Healthy Youth

When young people feel unconnected to home, family, and school, they may become involved in activities that put their health at risk. However, when parents affirm the value of their children, young people more often develop positive, healthy attitudes about themselves. Although most adults want youth to know about abstinence, contraception, and how to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), parents often have difficulty communicating about sex. Nevertheless, positive communication between parents and children greatly helps young people to establish individual values and to make healthy decisions.

### Parent-Child Warmth and Communication Promote Health, Achievement, and Self-Esteem.

- A major study showed that adolescents who reported feeling connected to parents and their family were more likely than other teens to delay initiating sexual intercourse.<sup>1</sup> Teens who said their families were warm and caring also reported less marijuana use and less emotional distress than their peers.<sup>2</sup>
- When parents and youth have good communication, along with appropriate firmness, studies have shown youth report less depression and anxiety and more self-reliance and self-esteem. They also report older age of first intercourse and lower frequency of sex during adolescence than their peers.<sup>3,4</sup>
- Lack of communication also affects behaviors and attitudes. In studies, young people who reported feeling a lack of parental warmth, love, or caring were also more likely to report emotional distress, lower self-esteem, school problems, drug use, and sexual risk behaviors.<sup>1,2</sup>

### Parent-Child Communication About Sexuality Promotes Sexually Healthy Behaviors.

Confident, loving parent-child communication leads to improved contraceptive and condom use, improved communication about sex, and fewer sexual risk behaviors among adolescents.

#### *Improved Contraception and Condom Use*

- In a recent study, teens who reportedly had a “good talk” with parents in the last year about sex, birth control, and the dangers of STDs were two times more likely to use condoms at the last time they had sex than teens who did not talk to their parents as often.<sup>5</sup>
- In one study, when mothers discussed condom use before teens initiated sexual intercourse, youth were three times more likely to use condoms than were teens whose mothers never discussed condoms or discussed condoms only after teens became sexually active. Moreover, condom use at first intercourse significantly predicted future condom use—teens who used condoms at first intercourse were 20 times more likely than other teens to use condoms regularly and 10 times more likely to use them at most recent intercourse.<sup>6</sup>
- Consistent users of contraception are more likely to report frequent conversations with parents than are teens who were not using contraception.<sup>7</sup>

- One study showed that when parents of sexually active African American and Latino youth had skilled, open, interactive discussions with their teens about sex, the youth were significantly more likely than the teens of less skilled communicators to use condoms at most recent intercourse and across time.<sup>8</sup>

#### *Improved Communication About Sex*

- Adolescents who have repeated communications about sex, sexuality, and development with their parents, are more likely to have an open and closer relationships with them, in addition to being more likely to talk with their parents in the future about sex issues than adolescents whose sexual communication with their parents included less repetition.<sup>9</sup>
- Teens who reported previous discussions of sexuality with parents were seven times more likely to feel able to communicate with a partner about HIV/AIDS than those who had not had such discussions with their parents.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Fewer Sexual Risk Behaviors*

- Two studies show that when parents make consistent efforts to know their teen's friends and whereabouts, the young people report fewer sexual partners, fewer coital acts, and more use of condoms and other forms of contraception.<sup>11,12</sup>
- Youth whose parents are open, responsive, comfortable, and confident in discussions about sex and related issues participate less often in sexual risk behavior, suggesting that the quality of communication influences the message adolescents receive about sex.<sup>13</sup>
- A study found that experienced African American female teens living with their mothers in a perceived supportive family were 50 percent less likely than teens in non-supportive families to report unprotected sex in the last 30 days or to report sex with a non-steady partner in the last six months.<sup>5</sup> In another study of African American and Latina/Hispanic adolescent females, higher levels of mother/daughter communication about sexual risks were associated with fewer episodes of unprotected sexual intercourse.<sup>14</sup>

## **Parent-Child Communication About Sex Varies by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, But Parents Are an Important Source of Sexual Health Information for All Youth.**

- Data has shown that 42 percent of Latino adolescents reported learning “a lot” about sexual health issues from their parents compared to 37 percent for white adolescents, but less than 60% of African American adolescents.<sup>15</sup>
- In one study, African American female adolescents reported more discussions about sex-related topics with their mothers than did male adolescents. However, males were just as likely to talk with mothers as with friends and only slightly less likely to talk with fathers.<sup>16</sup>
- In another study of African American and Latino adolescents, a significantly greater percentage of Latino teens than African American teens reported discussing at least two sex-related topics—HIV/AIDS and choosing a sex partner—with their father. Latino teens were also twice as likely as African American teens to discuss choosing a sex partner with their mothers.<sup>17</sup>
- Research shows that parents are the preferred source of information about contraception: 19.2 percent of students said they would prefer to get information about contraception from their parents rather than from community health centers, classes, hospitals, private doctors, television, or friends (12.5, 12.0, 11.1, 8.8, 7.9, and 6.9 percent, respectively).<sup>7</sup>

## **Negative or No Communication Can Lead to Negative Results.**

- In studies, young people who reported feeling a lack of parental warmth, love, or caring were also more likely to report emotional distress, lower self esteem, school problems, drug use, and sexual risk behaviors.<sup>1,3</sup>

- One study of urban African American and Latino mothers and their pre-teen and early adolescent daughters found many mothers reluctant to discuss more than biological issues and negative consequences of sexual activity. Maternal communications about sex, often restrictive and moralistic in tone, deterred daughters from confiding in their mothers. Daughters, in reaction, sometimes became secretly involved in romantic relationships.<sup>18</sup>
- The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found that Latina and Asian mothers were less likely to talk to their children about sex, but most likely to accurately report their daughters' sexual status, whereas the opposite was true for African Americans.<sup>14</sup>

## Parents Play the Most Important Role in Sex Education, But Need Resources and Support.

Studies show that many parents face challenges in being prepared to have discussions with young people about relationships, development, and sex. Schools are an important partner in helping young people prevent negative sexual health outcomes through comprehensive sex education.

- Many parents are not able to provide all the information about sex that young people need. In one survey, only 38 percent of young women and 25 percent of young men said they had ever gotten a good idea from their parents that helped them talk about sexual issues with their girlfriend/boyfriend.<sup>19</sup>
- One study of 192 college student participants showed that 77 percent of their mothers engaged in some level of sexuality communication with them compared to only 37 percent of their fathers.<sup>20</sup>
- In a recent poll, 89 percent of Americans said it is important for sex education in schools to include information about contraception and preventing unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.<sup>21</sup>
- Even though parents are the primary source of information about sexual and reproductive health for their children, few effective programs that help parents positively influence their children's sexual behavior yet exist. More research into science-driven, skills-based programs to support parent-child communication is needed.<sup>22</sup>

## References

- 1 Resnick MD et al. Protecting adolescents from harm: findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *JAMA* 1997;278:823-32.
- 2 Karofsky PS et al. Relationship between adolescent parental communication and initiation of first intercourse by adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2000; 28; 41-45.
- 3 Steinburg L. We know things: parent-adolescent relationships in retrospect and prospect. *J Research Adolesc* 2001; 11:1-19.
- 4 McNeely C et al. Mothers' influence on the timing of first sex among 14- and 15-year-olds. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2002; 31(3): 256-65.
- 5 Weinman M, Small E, Buzi RS, Smith P. Risk Factors, Parental Communication, Self and Peers' Beliefs as Predictors of Condom Use Among Female Adolescents Attending Family Planning Clinics. *Child Adolesc Soc Work J* 2008;25:157-170.
- 6 Miller KS et al. Patterns of condom use among adolescents: the impact of mother-adolescent communication. *Am J Public Health* 1998;88:1542-44.
- 7 Hacker KA et al. Listening to youth: teen perspectives on pregnancy prevention. *J Adolesc Health* 2000;26:279-88.
- 8 Whitaker DJ et al. Teenage partners' communication about sexual risk and condom use: the importance of parent-teenager discussions. *Fam Plann Perspect* 1999;31:117-21.
- 9 Martino SC, Elliott MN, Corona R et al. Beyond the "Big Talk": The Roles of Breadth and Repetition in Pre-Adolescent Communication About Sexual Topics. *Pediatrics*. 2008;121:e612-e618.

- 10 Shoop DM, Davidson PM. AIDS and adolescents: the relation of parent and partner communication to adolescent condom use. *J Adolesc* 1994;17:137-48.
- 11 Jemmott LS, Jemmott JB. Family structure, parental strictness, and sexual behavior among inner-city black male adolescents. *J Adolesc Research* 1992; 7:192-207.
- 12 Rodgers KB. Parenting processes related to sexual risk-taking behaviors of adolescent males and females. *J Marriage Fam* 1999;61:99-109.
- 13 Guilamo-Ramos V, Bouris A. Parent Adolescent Communication about Sex in Latino Families: A Guide for Practitioners. *The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy*. Jan 2008.
- 14 Meneses LM, et. al. Racial/ethnic Differences in Mother-daughter Communication About Sex. *J Adolesc Health* 2006;29:128-131.
- 15 Hoff T, Greene L, Davis J. *National Survey of Adolescents and Young Adults: Sexual Health Knowledge, Attitudes, and Experiences*. Menlo Park, CA: Henry Kaiser Foundation. 2003:55.
- 16 DiLorio C et al. Communication about sexual issues: mothers, fathers and friends. *J Adolesc Health* 1999;24:181-9.
- 17 Miller KS et al. Family communication about sex: what are parents saying and are their adolescents listening? *Fam Plann Perspect* 1998;30:218-22+.
- 18 O'Sullivan LF et al. Mother-daughter communication about sex among urban African American and Latino families. *J Adolesc Research* 2001;16:269-92.
- 19 Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation & YM Magazine. *National Survey of Teens: Teens Talk about Dating, Intimacy, and Their Sexual Experiences*. Menlo Park, CA: The Foundation, 1998.
- 20 Angera JJ et al. An Investigation of Parent/Child Communication about Sexuality. *Am J Sexuality Education*. 2008;3:165-181.
- 21 Hickman-Brown Public Opinion Research. *Public Support for Sexuality Education*. [Poll conducted for Advocates for Youth & SIECUS]. Washington, DC: Advocates, 1999.
- 22 Kirby D. The Impact of Interventions Designed to Promote Parent-Child Communication about Sexuality.

Updated by Alicia Whittaker, March 2010

Written by Nicholas Lagina, 2002

Advocates for Youth © 2010

## Parent-Child Communication Programs

Helping Parents Become Knowledgeable and Comfortable as Sex Educators

Research has found that good parent-child communication around sexuality has many positive effects for teens – including helping them protect their own sexual health. Good parent-child communication leads to better contraception use and lower sexual risk behaviors. Teens want their parents' guidance: research has found that more teens would prefer to get information about contraceptives from their parents than from a health center, class, hospital, media or friends.<sup>1</sup>

Studies show, however, that many parents face challenges in being prepared to have discussions with young people about relationships, development and sex. Many parents themselves do not have the information that young people need, or if they do, find it difficult to talk to young people: a recent survey found that 24 percent of female teens' parents, and 38 percent of male teens' parents, had never spoken with them about abstinence or about methods of birth control.<sup>2</sup> But science-driven, skills-based programs exist which can support parent-child communication: helping to strengthen the bond between parents and children and ensuring that young people acquire the skills they need to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV.

The following is a summary of the research about parent-child communication programs, as well as summaries of programs which support parents in becoming more knowledgeable and comfortable in their role as a sexuality educator of their children. The programs are sponsored by a variety of organizations and religious groups. They utilize various strategies, including classroom meetings, media, and homework assignments.

### PARENT-CHILD CONNECTEDNESS & COMMUNICATION PROMOTES HEALTH, ACHIEVEMENT & SELF-ESTEEM

Positive communication can greatly help young people establish individual values and make healthy decisions. Studies show that young people who feel a lack of parental warmth, love or care were more likely to report emotional distress, school problems, drug use and sexual risk behaviors.<sup>3,4</sup> Young people also report less depression and anxiety and more self-reliance and self-esteem than other peers who discuss sex with their parents.

### PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION ABOUT SEXUALITY PROMOTES SEXUALLY HEALTHY BEHAVIORS

Confident, loving parent-child communication leads to improved contraceptive and condom use, improved communication about sex and fewer sexual risk behaviors among adolescents. Major studies show that adolescents who feel open to discussing sexual health with their parents are more likely to delay initiating sexual intercourse.<sup>5</sup> In a recent study, teens that reportedly had a healthy discussion with parents in the last year about sex, birth control and the dangers of STDs were two times more likely to use condoms the last time they had sex than teens who did not talk to their parents as often.<sup>5</sup> In another study, if mothers particularly discussed condom use before teens initiated sexual intercourse, their teens were three times more likely to use condoms than mothers who never discussed condoms or talked about it only after teens had become sexually active.<sup>6</sup> This is important for youth later in life because a teen who uses a condom at first intercourse is 20 times more likely than other teens to use them regularly and ten times more likely to use them in recent sexual activity.<sup>6</sup> Also, when parents make consistent efforts to know their teen's friends, young people report fewer sexual partners, fewer coital acts, and more use of condoms and contraceptives.<sup>7,8</sup> Teens who reported discussing sexuality with their parents were seven times more likely to talk to their partner about HIV/AIDS than those who had not communicated with their parents.<sup>9</sup>

### PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION ABOUT SEX VARIES BY RACE/ ETHNICITY & GENDER, BUT PARENTS ARE AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF SEXUAL HEALTH INFORMATION FOR ALL YOUTH

In one study, sixty percent of African American adolescents reported learning "a lot" about sexual health issues from their parents and 42 percent of Latino adolescents compared to 37 percent of white adolescents.<sup>10</sup> Another found that African American and Latina/Hispanic females with high levels of mother/daughter communication about sexual risks were associated with fewer episodes of unprotected sexual intercourse.<sup>11</sup> Additional research showed that African American, female teens in a supportive family were 50 percent less likely than teens in non-supportive families to report unprotected sex in the last 30 days or to report sex with a non-steady partner in the last six months.<sup>5</sup>

# Many parents face challenges in being prepared to have discussions with young people about relationships, development and sex.

## PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS

The following are parent-child programs that can help parents improve their comfort and facility in speaking with their child about sex and sexuality.

*Talking Parents, Healthy Teens*<sup>32,33</sup>

**Objective:** To help parents improve communication with adolescents; the program is held at parents' worksites to make it convenient for them to learn about adolescent sexual health.

**Basic Content:** Talking Parents, Healthy Teens is a program that consists of eight weekly 1-hour sessions during the parent's lunch hour at work. Thirteen for-profit businesses, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies in Southern California participated in the evaluation with 20 parents in each group. Session topics included: building your relationship with your child; adolescent development and new ways of communicating; listening skills for talking about sensitive topics; getting past roadblocks with talking about sex; helping your child make decisions, assertiveness skills, abstinence, and contraception; coping with conflict; supervising your child and how to stay motivated. The parents' children were given mail-in surveys to ask if communication had been improved.

**Outcomes/Results:** The feedback from the program was very favorable. Ninety-six per cent of participants reported that they would definitely (72 percent) or probably (24 percent) recommend the program to a friend or coworker.<sup>32</sup> All of the adolescents mailed in their surveys and the results showed that they were more comfortable in communicating with their parents.<sup>33</sup>

**Conclusion/Summary:** This program offers an innovative way for parents, in a comfortable setting, to learn how to communicate with their children about sexual health issues. Results have been positive, with youth feeling more at ease talking with their parents. Though it is a fairly new program it has been recommended by many parents who have participated.

*Keepin' it R.E.A.L.: Mother-Adolescent HIV Prevention Program*<sup>34,35</sup>

**Objective:** To promote the delay of sexual intercourse and to increase communication between mothers and their teens.

**Basic Content:** In this program conducted in 11 Boys & Girls Clubs in the Southeastern area, 582 adolescents between the ages of 11 and 14 and 470 mothers were randomly assigned to three groups: control; problem-behavior theory; social cognitive theory (SCT). The control group received one initial HIV education session. In the life skills (LSK) group (guided by the theory that behaviors that are based on "common underlying psychological attributes or predisposition"), mothers and adolescents attended sessions separately. The SCT group received seven 2-hour meetings that were held over two weeks. In the social cognitive theory group, mothers and adolescents attended four sessions together and three separately.

**Outcomes/Results:** Mothers in both intervention groups showed an increase in self-efficacy and comfort in talking with their teen over time. Youth in the life skills group who were sexually active showed a greater increase in condom use than in the other groups. All three groups reported increases in their confidence to say no to sex. There were no differences regarding sexual initiation between teens in the control or intervention groups. These results were accumulated over 4, 12, and 24 months after the program.

**Conclusion/Summary:** This program can help mothers of adolescents feel more comfortable and confident talking to their adolescents about sex.

*Saving Sex for Later*<sup>36</sup>

**Objective:** To increase communication of parents and children and to promote delay of sexual activity. CDs mailed to families provide parents and teens with a convenient way of discussing a variety of sexual health topics, including peer pressures, puberty, relationships, and reasons for delaying sex.

**Basic Content:** Saving Sex for Later was a parent education program that 846 families with 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in seven New York City schools participated in to focus on increasing parent-child communication and delaying sexual initiation. Three CDs were mailed to families over a six month time period. The CDs address changes in bodies, relationships, peer pressures and influences.

**Outcomes/Results:** Eighty-five per cent of parents listened to one or more of the CDs and 69 percent reported listening with their child. Results included an increase of communication with teens about risk behaviors; parent self-efficacy; and fewer behavioral risks. Youths were more likely to report high family support.

This is an innovative and convenient way for

parents and youth to listen and talk about sexual health. Many parents were receptive and listened with their child, which resulted in an increase in communication and family support.

*Parents Matter!*<sup>17</sup>

**Objective:** To reduce sexual risk behavior among adolescents by giving parents tools to deliver primary prevention to their children.

**Basic Content:** The program consists of five 2.5 hour sessions over five weeks for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents. Topics included risk awareness, positive parenting practices and sexual communication.

**Outcomes/Results:** In a study that evaluated program results among 1,115 African American parents of 9-12 year old adolescents, eighty-six per cent of parents attended at least four sessions and "nearly all had a very positive rating and said it was very important." Evaluation showed that a year and a half after the program, parents reported significant increases in the number of sex topics (including abstinence) they discussed with their adolescent compared to the control group. The program is now being implemented in Kenya and seven other African countries. It has also been conducted in Puerto Rico and 15 other sites around the US at many different venues.

**Conclusion/Summary:** Results have shown that talking with their child after the program has become easier for parents with the knowledge and skills learned.

## PARENT COMPONENT WITHIN A YOUTH SEX ED PROGRAM

*Focus on Kids Plus ImPACT*<sup>18</sup>

**Objective:** To reduce adolescent truancy, substance abuse, and sexual risk behaviors. The program consists of eight weekly sessions that discuss HIV/AIDS, STDs, contraception and sexual health.

**Basic Content:** Focus on Kids Plus ImPACT consists of 8 one and a half hour sessions and an optional day long retreat that aims to involve parents in sex ed while helping them communicate more with their child. Homework assignments help parents become involved with classroom assignments. Session activities include role-playing, videos, small group discussions and a community project. One session is devoted to parents and children emphasizing communication through activities. Topics covered in the program include contraception, decision making skills, communication, HIV/AIDS and STDs.

**Outcomes/Results:** An evaluation of 817 youth in Baltimore found that after six months, youth who participated in the retreat with their parents reported significantly lower rates of sexual intercourse and unprotected sex compared to youth in only the Focus on Kids program without the parent component. They were also less likely to report other risky behaviors like alcohol and

drug use.

**Conclusion/Summary:** Focus on Kids is a program that provides a parent component to make sure parents are part of the learning process in their children's sexual health. Results show that children in the program with parent participation are more likely to use condoms and are less likely to engage in sexual activity.

*Youth AIDS Prevention Program (YAPP)*<sup>19,20</sup>

**Objective:** To prevent STDs, HIV/AIDS and substance abuse among high-risk junior high students. Youth AIDS Prevention Program (YAPP) includes ten sessions for 7<sup>th</sup> graders, with homework assignments to complete with parents and an optional parent workshop.

**Basic Content:** Homework assignments are included to involve parents. Guiding the program is social cognitive theory, which targets teens' knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, intentions and behaviors. The optional 1.5 hour parent workshop shares the curriculum and discusses the current trends in sexual activity. Parents are given a post-program questionnaire to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Then in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students are given five sessions in a week to continue their learning about sexual health.

**Outcomes/Results:** The program was evaluated in Chicago within 15 districts; results showed that youth in the program were more comfortable in talking with parents about sexuality compared with youth in the control group. Sexually active students were more likely than the control group to use condoms and showed greater intention to use them in the future.

**Conclusion/Summary:** YAPP gives parents a way to become involved through homework assignments and an optional workshop to understand what the students will be learning. The program

# Programs exist which can support parent-child communication: helping to strengthen the bond between parents and children and ensuring that young people acquire the skills they need.

# Confident, loving parent-child communication leads to improved contraceptive and condom use, improved communication about sex and fewer sexual risk behaviors among adolescents.

aims to educate students in their junior high school years with all elements of sexual health.

## *Reducing the Risk*<sup>23,22</sup>

**Objective:** To teach adolescents to resist peer pressure, make good decisions, and negotiate safer sex behaviors; the program encourages adolescents to talk to parents about abstinence and birth control.

**Basic Content:** Reducing the Risk consists of 16 sessions each 45 minutes and an optional 90 minute class that includes information on abstinence and contraception. The program is implemented in high schools for youths specifically in ninth and tenth grade. The evaluated program took place in 13 California high schools with 1,033 students.

**Outcomes/Results:** The program found that after 758 students completed surveys at six and eighteen months, there was an increase in parent-child communication about both abstinence and contraception. There was a 24 percent decrease in the initiation of sexual intercourse as opposed to the control group. There was also a significant decrease in unprotected sex. At pretest, 11 percent in both control and treatment groups had engaged in unprotected sexual intercourse and at posttest 13 percent of treatment group as opposed to 23 percent in the control group had unprotected sex. The program was also implemented in Arkansas with 212 young people participating with same outcome occurrence. This included a significant increase in communication with parents, a delayed initiation of sexual intercourse and in addition, increased use of contraception. The control group was given a semester health education program of the school district's choice.

Two curriculum activities required students to talk with their parents about abstinence and contraception. Both students and parents re-

ported that the assignments enabled them to talk with each other more easily about these topics. Six months after the intervention, program youth were significantly more likely than control youth to have ever discussed abstinence or contraception with parents.

**Conclusion/Summary:** Students' knowledge of contraception and discussion with parents substantially increased over time after both program implementations. Additionally, youth delayed the initiation of sexual intercourse and there was an increase in protected sex among the sexually active. Parents serve an important role in this program, discussing with their child topics learned in the lessons.

## *Safer Choices*<sup>23,24,25</sup>

**Objective:** To teach high school students that using protection against pregnancy and STDs is a safer choice, and choosing not to have intercourse is the safest choice.

**Basic Content:** The program is a two year HIV/STI and teen pregnancy prevention program encouraging abstinence and contraceptive use. There are 20 sequential sessions for ninth and tenth graders. Parents receive a newsletter and participate in homework assignments and the classes' link activities to give familiarity with support services in the community. Parents are involved throughout the program through newsletters and homework assignments.

**Outcomes/Results:** In California and Texas 20 high schools with a total of 3,869 ninth grade students participated. After a 31 month evaluation there was an increase in condom use (1.68 times more likely than control), an increase in effective contraception (1.76 times more likely than control), a delay in sexual initiation, and an increase in knowledge of HIV/STI.

**Conclusion/Summary:** The program integrates a parent's newsletter and homework assignments with a classroom session. As a result, parent-child communication increased.

Written by Emily Kitchen, Education and Outreach Intern, and Barbara Huberman, RN, MEd, Director,

Advocates for Youth © June 2011

## REFERENCES

1. Hacker KA. Listening to youth: teen perspectives on

- pregnancy prevention. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2000; 26(4): 279-88.
2. Pazol K et al. Vital Signs: Teen Pregnancy — United States, 1991–2009. *MMWR*, April 2011.
  3. Resnick, M. (1997). Protecting Adolescents from harm: Findings from National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *JAMA*, 278:823-32
  4. Karofsky PS et al. Relationship between adolescent parental communication and initiation of first intercourse by adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2000; 28; 41-45.
  5. Weinman, M et al. Risk Factors, Parental Communication, Self and Peers' Beliefs as Predictors of Condom Use Among Female Adolescents Attending Family Planning Clinics. *Child Adolesc Soc Work J* 2008; 25:157-170.
  6. Miller KS et al. Patterns of condom use among adolescents: the impact of mother-adolescent communication. *Am J Public Health* 1998;88:1542-44.
  7. Jemmott, L. & Jemmott, J. Family Structure, Parental Strictness & Sexual Behavior among Inner-City Black Male Adolescents . *J Adolesc Research* 1992; 7:192-207.
  8. Rodgers KB. Parenting processes related to sexual risk taking behaviors of adolescent males and females. *J Marriage Fam* 1999;61:99-109.
  9. Shoop, D., & Davidson, P. AIDS and Adolescents: The Relation of Parent and Partner Communication to Adolescent Condom Use. *J Adoles* 1994; 17:137-48.
  10. Hoff T et al. National Survey of Adolescents and Young Adults: Sexual Health Knowledge, Attitudes, and Experiences. Menlo Park, CA: Henry Kaiser Foundation, 2003.
  11. Meneses, L. (2006). Racial/ Ethnic Differences in Mother Daughter Communication about Sex . *J Adolesc Health* , 29:128-131
  12. Schuster, M. M., Eastman, K. P., & Corona, R. P. Talking to Parents, Healthy Teens: A Worksite-based Program for Parents to Promote Adolescent Sexual Health. *Public Health Research, Practice & Policy*, 2006.
  13. Martino, S. P., Elliot, M. P., Corona, R. P., Kanouse, D. P., & Schuster, M. M. Beyond the "Big Talk": The Roles of Breadth & Repetition in Parent-Adolescent Communication About Sexual Topics . *Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics*, 2009.
  14. Dillorio, C. Keepin' it R.E.A.L. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 2007. <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/EA2007/desc/real.aspx>
  15. Dillorio, C. et al. Keepin' it R.E.A.L.: A Mother-Adolescent HIV Prevention Program, 2006 . Retrieved from <http://www.socio.com/srch/summary/pasha/full/passt26.htm>.
  16. O'Donnell, L., Stueve, A., Wilson-Simmons, R., Duran, R., & Jeanbaptiste, V. Saving Sex for Later: An Evaluation of a Parent Education Intervention . *Guttmacher Perspectives on Sexual & Reproductive Health*, 2005.
  17. Passin, W. Overview of Parents Matter! 2010.
  18. Focus on Kids (FOK) plus ImPACT. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, 2006. Accessed from <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/research/prs/resources/factsheets/FOK-ImPACT.htm>
  19. Levy, S. P., Flay, B., Phil, D., & Handier, A. D. (n.d.). Youth AIDS Prevention Project. PASHA Program by Sociometrics. Accessed from <http://www.socio.com/srch/summary/pasha/full/passt06.htm>
  20. Child Trends. Youth AIDS Prevention Project. Child Trends, 2007
  21. Kirby D, Barth RP, Leland N et al. Reducing the Risk: impact of a new curriculum on sexual risk-taking. *Family Planning Perspectives* 1991; 23:253-263.
  22. Hubbard BM, Giese ML, Rainey J. A replication study of Reducing the Risk, a theory-based sexuality curriculum for adolescents. *Journal of School Health* 1998; 68:243-247.
  23. Coyle K, Basen-Engquist K, Kirby D et al. Short-term impact of Safer Choices: a multicomponent, school-based HIV, other STD, and pregnancy prevention program. *Journal of School Health* 1999; 69:181-188.
  24. Coyle K, Basen-Engquist K, Kirby D et al. Safer Choices: reducing teen pregnancy, HIV, and STDs. *Public Health Reports* 2001; 116 (Supplement 1):82-93.
  25. Kirby D, Baumler E, Coyle K et al. The Safer Choices intervention: its impact on the sexual behaviors of different subgroups of high school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2004; 35:442-452.

## **SELECTED NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED ABOUT ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH**

### **Advocates for Youth**

2000 M Street NW, Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.419.3420  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

### **Alan Guttmacher Institute**

120 Wall St., 21st Floor  
New York, NY 10005  
212.248.1111  
[www.guttmacher.org](http://www.guttmacher.org)

### **American Academy of Pediatrics**

141 Northwest Point Boulevard  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
847.434.4000  
[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

### **American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists**

409 12th Street SW  
PO Box 96920  
Washington, DC 20090-6920  
202.638.5577  
[www.acog.org](http://www.acog.org)

### **American Foundation for AIDS Research**

120 Wall Street, 13th Floor  
New York, NY 10005-3908  
212.806.1600  
[www.amfar.org](http://www.amfar.org)

### **American Public Health Association**

800 I Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3710  
202.777.2742  
[www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)

### **Boys and Girls Clubs of America**

1230 West Peachtree Street NW  
Atlanta, GA 30309  
404.487.5700  
[www.bgca.org](http://www.bgca.org)

### **Camp Fire Boys and Girls**

4601 Madison Avenue  
Kansas City, MO 64112-1278  
816.756.1950  
[www.campfire.org](http://www.campfire.org)

### **Catholics for Free Choice**

1436 U Street NW, Suite 301  
Washington, DC 20009-3997  
202.986.6093  
[www.catholicsforchoice.org](http://www.catholicsforchoice.org)

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Division of Adolescent and School Health**

Mailstop K31  
4770 Buford Highway NE  
Atlanta, GA 30341-3724  
770.488.5358  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

### **Center for Reproductive Rights**

120 Wall Street  
New York, NY 10005  
917.637.3600  
[www.reproductiverights.org](http://www.reproductiverights.org)

### **Council of Chief State School Officers**

1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20001-1431  
202.336.7000  
[www.cesso.org](http://www.cesso.org)

### **Girls Incorporated**

120 Wall Street  
New York, New York 10015-3902  
800.374.4475  
[www.girlsinc.org](http://www.girlsinc.org)

### **Healthy Teen Network (Formerly NOAPPP)**

1501 Saint Paul St. Ste. 124  
Chevy Chase, MD 21202  
410.685.0410  
[www.healthyteennetwork.org](http://www.healthyteennetwork.org)

### **National 4-H Council**

7100 Connecticut Avenue NW Chevy Chase,  
MD 20815-4999  
301.961.2800  
[www.fourhcouncil.edu](http://www.fourhcouncil.edu)

**NARAL Pro-Choice America**

1156 15th Street NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.973.3000  
[www.naral.org](http://www.naral.org)

**National Adolescent Health Information Center**

333 California Street, Box 0503  
San Francisco, CA 94143-0503  
415.502.4856  
<http://youth.ucsf.edu/na hic>

**National Prevention Information Network (NPIN), CDC**

PO Box 6003  
Rockville, MD 20849-6003  
1.800.458.5231  
[www.cdcnpin.org](http://www.cdcnpin.org)

**National Asian Women's Health Organization**

250 Montgomery Street, Suite 1500  
San Francisco, CA 94104  
415.989.9747  
[www.nawho.org](http://www.nawho.org)

**National Assembly for School-Based Health Care**

1100 G Street #735  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.638.5872  
[www.nasbhc.org](http://www.nasbhc.org)

**National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy**

1776 Massachusetts Ave NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.478.8500  
[www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org)

**National Center for Youth Law**

405 14th St, 15th Floor  
Oakland, CA 94612-2701  
510.835.8098  
[www.youthlaw.org](http://www.youthlaw.org)

**National Coalition of Hispanic Health & Human Services Organizations (COSSHMO)**

1501 16th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.387.5000  
[www.cosshnio.org](http://www.cosshnio.org)

**National Council of La Raza**

1111 19th Street NW, Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.785.1670  
[www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org)

**National Education Association, Health Information Network**

1201 16th Street NW, Suite 521  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.822.7570  
[www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org)

**National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association (1\ IFPRHA)**

1627 K Street NW, 12th Floor  
Washington, DC 20006  
202.293.3114  
[www.nfprha.org](http://www.nfprha.org)

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America**

434 West 33rd Street  
New York, NY 10001  
212.541.7800  
[www.plannedparenthood.org](http://www.plannedparenthood.org),

**Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice**

1025 Vermont Ave NW, Suite 1130  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.628.7700  
[www.rcrc.org](http://www.rcrc.org)

**Sex Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)**

130 West 42nd Street, Suite 350  
New York, NY 10036-7802  
212.819.9770  
[www.siecus.org](http://www.siecus.org)

**YWCA of the USA Youth Development Program**

1015 18th Street NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036  
202.467.0801  
[www.ywca.org](http://www.ywca.org)

## WEBSITES

### Websites Especially for Parents

- American Library Association  
[www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)
- Families Are Talking  
[www.familiesaretalking.org](http://www.familiesaretalking.org)
- Parents' Sex Ed Center  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents)
- ParentSoup.com  
[www.parentsoup.com](http://www.parentsoup.com)
- ParentsPlace.com  
[www.parentsplace.com](http://www.parentsplace.com)
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America  
[www.plannedparenthood.org/education/](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/education/)
- Talking with Kids About Tough Issues  
[www.talkingwithkids.org](http://www.talkingwithkids.org)
- YWCA of the USA  
[www.ywca.org](http://www.ywca.org)

### Web Sites Especially for Young People

- Ambiente Joven  
[www.ambienteioven.org](http://www.ambienteioven.org)
- Go Ask Alice!  
[www.goaskaliee.columbia.edu](http://www.goaskaliee.columbia.edu)
- iwannaknow.org  
[www.iwannaknow.org](http://www.iwannaknow.org)
- My Sistahs  
[www.mysistahs.org](http://www.mysistahs.org)
- My Voice Counts Youth Action Center  
[www.advoeatesforyouth.org/youth/](http://www.advoeatesforyouth.org/youth/)
- Sex, Etc.  
[www.sexetc.org](http://www.sexetc.org)
- Teenwire  
[www.teenwire.com](http://www.teenwire.com)
- Youth Resource  
[www.youthresouree.com](http://www.youthresouree.com)

### Web Site Educational Resources

- Advocates for Youth  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

- American Association for Health Education  
[www.aaliperd.org/aahe/](http://www.aaliperd.org/aahe/)
- American Medical Association's Adolescent Health Information  
[www.ama-assmorg/ama/pub/eategory/1947.html](http://www.ama-assmorg/ama/pub/eategory/1947.html)
- Birds and Bees  
[www.birdsandbees.org](http://www.birdsandbees.org)
- The Body (HIV/AIDS Resources)  
[www.thebody.com](http://www.thebody.com)
- Campaign for Our Children  
[www.cfoc.org](http://www.cfoc.org)
- CDC National Prevention Information Network  
[www.cdcnpin.org](http://www.cdcnpin.org)
- Children's Defense Fund  
[www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)
- Child Welfare League of America  
[www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org)
- Family Health Productions  
[www.abouthhealth.com](http://www.abouthhealth.com)
- Girls Incorporated  
[www.girlsinc.org](http://www.girlsinc.org)
- National Council of La Raza  
[www.nelr.org](http://www.nelr.org)
- National Education Association Health Information Network  
[www.neahin.org](http://www.neahin.org)
- National School Boards Association  
[www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org)
- Parents Sex Ed Center  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents-sex-ed-center-home](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/parents-sex-ed-center-home)
- SexTalk.org  
[www.sextalk.org](http://www.sextalk.org)
- Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)  
[www.siecus.org](http://www.siecus.org)



# Chapter VIII: Sample Materials from LTM Campaigns around the Nation

## Let's Talk Month

### **Sample Proclamation**

WHEREAS, healthy attitudes about sexuality are essential to raising responsible, self-reliant children; and

WHEREAS, parents are the primary sources of sexuality education for their children; and

WHEREAS, parents need support from family, friends, neighbors, schools, community organizations and institutions to instill and reinforce healthy attitudes toward sexuality; and

WHEREAS, "Let's Talk Month" is a national and statewide initiative that underscores the importance of a strong partnership between families and their community to help young people foster responsible and positive attitudes toward their sexuality; and

WHEREAS, working together, parents and their communities can provide the information and support necessary to prepare today's young people for their responsibilities as adults and parents of tomorrow;

Now, Therefore, Be It RESOLVED, The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaims October 2002 as "LET'S TALK MONTH" and commends this observance to our citizens.

Signed by: County Board of Commissioners  
County Manager

## PROCLAMATION

# State of North Carolina



JAMES B. HUNT JR.  
GOVERNOR

## LET'S TALK MONTH

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

### A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina emphasizes that parents are the primary sources of sexual education for their children. Let's Talk -- National Family Sexuality Education Month -- encourages individuals, community organizations and institutions to celebrate October by conducting special events promoting family education about sexuality; and

WHEREAS, Let's Talk Month notes the importance of a strong partnership between the community and the family in helping young people foster responsible and positive attitudes towards their sexuality. Religious organizations and community agencies are assuming leadership roles in this effort by providing information, resources and educational programs for parents and children; and

WHEREAS, accurate education about sexuality will prepare today's young people to educate their children. An honest approach to sexuality and an ability to inform children in an appropriate manner are elements that promote healthy sexual attitudes and behavior. Working together, parents and their communities can provide the information and support necessary to prepare today's young people for their responsibilities as adults and parents of tomorrow;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JAMES B. HUNT JR., Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim October, 1995, as "Let's Talk Month" in North Carolina and commend this observance to our citizens.



*James B. Hunt Jr.*  
JAMES B. HUNT JR.

WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this third day of July in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.



## STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Set aside time each day to talk with and listen to your children.
- Be a positive role model for your children.
- Make home a place where your children are safe, loved and nurtured and where there is mutual respect and enjoyment.
- Learn to be an “askable” adult who will accept all questions and answer all questions honestly, especially about sexuality.
- Go to the public library with your children and develop the habit of borrowing books for fun and information.
- Watch television together and discuss behavior reflecting on your standards and values.
- Become an advocate at the local, state or national level for programs and services that help prevent sexual risk-taking behaviors.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



## STRATEGIES FOR MEDIA

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Write an editorial or publish an op-ed endorsing the goals for **LET'S TALK Month** in your community.
- Donate advertising space and printing of materials for **LET'S TALK Month** activities in your community.
- Develop and broadcast public service announcements about **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Sponsor or cover a distinguished lecturer speaking on parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Feature articles or programs on parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Sponsor a song writing contest focused on communication.
- Involve a well-known media personality in a community event during **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Start a Teen Talk call-in radio show or newspaper column using local experts and teen moderators or writers.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



## STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOLS OR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Conduct focus groups with students to learn more about the school's role in promoting parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Pass a school board resolution endorsing the goals of **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Plan a poster or essay contest during **LET'S TALK Month** on reasons why some young people get sexually involved and reasons why others wait.
- Organize a conference on adolescent health issues including relationships, peer pressure, teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted Diseases, drugs and alcohol, smoking, depression and suicide.
- Develop a series for the school newspaper on parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Conduct a student survey to identify the prevalence of high-risk sexual behaviors.
- Provide workshops for parents on how to talk about sex with their children.
- Sponsor a comprehensive after school program for at-risk children.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



## STRATEGIES FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Sponsor a community kick-off luncheon during **LET'S TALK Month** to help parents communicate with their children, showcase local programs and to build support for comprehensive, balanced sexuality education.
- Organize a health fair at a local park, shopping mall or school to link residents to health resources in the community.
- Provide supervised recreational programs after school and a study center for homework help.
- Develop a speaker's bureau on parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Provide training for parents and adult leaders in the community on how to talk about sexuality, decision making skills, and values.
- Create clubs for at-risk youth to promote a positive sense of self esteem, develop leadership skills and achieve academic excellence.
- Train and support peer educators as positive role models in the community to provide information and access to services for at-risk youth.
- Develop adolescent health clinics in community locations or school sites to provide specialized health education and clinical services.
- Provide a hot line for parents and teens with information and referral about sexuality issues.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



2000 M St NW, Ste 750 | Washington, DC 20036 USA | P: 202.419.3420 | F: 202.419.1448  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)



## STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS OR INDUSTRY

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Endorse the **LET'S TALK Month** resolution as a sound "investment" in the future.
- Sponsor community activities during **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Donate space or in-kind goods or services to a program or community alliance working to promote parent/child communication.
- Develop a resource center for your employees providing information on health, education, social support, and recreational services available in the community for families.
- Provide work internships for youth in the community to help develop a future work force and provide positive alternatives to unsupervised high-risk behaviors.
- Offer release time for staff to participate on voluntary boards or task forces that address youth issues.
- Hold Brown Bag seminars on parent/youth communication about sexuality for employees.
- Insert flyers on parent/youth communication about sexuality in paycheck envelopes.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



## STRATEGIES FOR POLICY MAKERS

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Pass a resolution proclaiming October as **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Issue a news release to broaden public awareness of the goals and objectives of **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Participate in local, county and state level activities for **LET'S TALK Month** and support on-going activities to prevent teen pregnancy.
- Host a city-wide public forum for community ideas to promote parents as sexuality educators of their children.
- Convene or join a task force to study the scope of sexual risk taking behaviors in your municipality or county, to identify community resources, and to prioritize activities that can be undertaken to address the problems.
- Initiate public-private partnerships to generate funds or in-kind donations for needed community services that are effective in supporting families.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



## STRATEGIES FOR TEENS

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Watch a movie or TV program about the relationships between young people. Watch for pressures, realism, behaviors, consequences or actions, etc. Discuss these issues with a parent, sibling, or friend. What messages are given in the show about the teen relationships?
- List the characteristics you think are important in a boyfriend/girlfriend, the characteristics you think are important in a marriage partner, and the characteristics you think are important in a parent. Compare the lists and discuss the differences.
- Read a book about sexuality. Choose the topic of sexuality for your next report, presentation, or group project at school.
- Write an article or letter to the editor for your local paper about communication with parents about sexuality.
- Ask your school newspaper to focus on **LET'S TALK Month** in October.
- Talk with your parents about sexuality.
- Invite a speaker to your youth group, club, team, or other group to discuss sexuality.
- Ask your church/synagogue to sponsor a service on parent/youth communication about sexuality.



## STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITIES OF FAITH

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Educate your congregation about **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Sponsor a youth fair or a conference on teen sexuality.
- Engage youth in theater performances about sexuality issues.
- Develop a teen musical which includes positive messages about sexuality.
- Sponsor a panel of teens to speak to your youth group about reproductive and sexual health experiences.
- Offer parenting classes about sexuality.
- Open up your synagogue/mosque/church to community organizations to use for after school, evening, and weekend activities.
- Write a position statement about parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Write a pastoral letter for your congregation and circulate it to other congregations about **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Sponsor an interfaith conference on sexuality.
- Dedicate sermons and religious school lessons to sexuality issues during October.



## STRATEGIES FOR CIVIC AND SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Host a special presentation for your group on parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Endorse **LET'S TALK Month** Resolutions or Proclamations.
- Adopt parent/youth communication about sexuality as a priority area for the group's service and funding activities.
- Sponsor community activities during **LET'S TALK Month**.
- Purchase educational materials for community-wide distribution and for the public library.
- Recruit members of your organization to develop leadership skills and a commitment to community service for youth.
- Provide community leadership to raise public awareness of the issue of sexual risk taking by designating a spokesperson for the organization to speak with the media.
- Work collaboratively with school, health or social service organizations to develop a volunteer mentoring program for at-risk youth.
- Hold a community forum on parent/youth communication about sexuality.
- Hold poster, essay or rap contests for youth on the theme of parent/youth communication about sexuality.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



## 10 THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR LET'S TALK MONTH

**LET'S TALK Month** emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Below are a few ideas on how you can participate in **LET'S TALK Month**:

- Include an article about “**LET'S TALK**” in your newsletter or bulletin.
- Sponsor a parent-child communication training program at your school.
- Provide parents with resources such as pamphlets, brochures, and articles, etc.
- Encourage your school board members, administrators, teachers, nurses, and counselors to attend training programs in child/adolescent health and sexuality.
- Ask parents and other adults to wear an “I’m Askable” button.
- Suggest that parents leave an “invitation to talk” in their child’s lunch, bedroom, on a mirror, or any other place the child will find it.
- Sponsor a contest (coloring, poster, essay) for your students that encourages parent-child communication.
- Promote local civic organizations to sponsor an event that will promote child health and/or parent-child communication.
- Encourage local churches and other faith organizations to participate in promoting **LET'S TALK** activities in your area.
- Start a “make a date” campaign. Ask parents to schedule a time with their family to sit down and talk together.

*Adapted with permission of Florida Developmental Disabilities Council.*



2000 M St NW, Ste 750 | Washington, DC 20036 USA | P: 202.419.3420 | F: 202.419.1448  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

## MEDIA



### SAMPLE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ▶ October is **LET'S TALK Month** in \_\_\_\_\_ (county). **LET'S TALK Month** is designed to promote parent and teen communication about sexuality. Many issues of concern to parents and teens are being addressed by local agencies and organizations, schools, churches and synagogues throughout the community this month. Don't miss out! Take this opportunity to talk to your parent or teen today! For more information, call.....
- ▶ Understanding sexuality is a lifelong process. Young people have many questions. Are you an askable parent? October is **LET'S TALK Month**. Become askable! For more information, call....
- ▶ Learning to talk about sex with your kids isn't always easy. They seem to ask questions at the wrong time and wrong place. But now is the right time for you to be an askable parent-- learn and share what you learn with your child. October is **LET'S TALK Month**, and your local coalition for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy can help. Call.....
- ▶ October is **LET'S TALK Month**, a time to promote the ideal that parents and future parents should be among the primary sexuality educators of their children. Support efforts in your community to prepare yourself for this responsibility. For more information, contact.....
- ▶ October is **LET'S TALK Month**. The best time to talk to your kids about sex is now. Be askable. Let your kids know they can talk to you -- anytime! Call ....
- ▶ October is **LET'S TALK Month**. The best place to talk to your kids about sex is your place. Parents: Talk to your kids about sex -- today! We can help you. Call.....
- ▶ October is **LET'S TALK Month**. Sex education belongs in the home, school, church, or synagogue. Youth programs can help, too. Talk to your kids about sex. For materials and help, call....
- ▶ Parents: It's Time to Talk...About Sex. Some tips on talking to your preteen or teen about sex are:
  1. Try to answer what's being asked, not what you think is being asked.
  2. If you really do sense there is a question behind the question, go ahead and carefully try to give your emotional support.
  3. Try to be aware of your own attitudes.
  4. Try to convey that you believe in your child and you're more concerned

about his/her quality of life and relationships with others rather than what they have done.

5. Use humor but don't laugh at your kids.

For more information, contact:

- ▶ Would you like to tell your child the facts of life, but feel you don't have all the facts? We encourage you to talk with your child, especially during **LET'S TALK Month**. For more information, call....
- ▶ October is **LET'S TALK Month**. **LET'S TALK Month** is designed to promote parent and teen communication and community education about sexuality. Many issues of concern to parents and teens are being addressed by local community groups, schools and churches throughout the community this month. Don't miss out! Take this opportunity to talk to your parent or teen today! For more information, call.....
- ▶ October is **LET'S TALK Month**. Each October \_\_\_\_\_ (sponsoring agency) coordinates a month-long schedule of community activities aimed at encouraging and supporting family communication about sexuality. These activities, sponsored by various community agencies, are usually targeted at parents and adolescents to encourage parents to talk to their adolescent children about the many sensitive issues confronting teenagers today. These issues may include school concerns, friendships and dating, family issues, sexuality, alcohol and drug use, and other related issues. \_\_\_\_\_ distributes a calendar of events for **LET'S TALK Month**. For more information, call.....
- ▶ Today, October 1, is the kick-off for **LET'S TALK Month** coordinated by \_\_\_\_\_. **LET'S TALK Month** is designed to promote and foster positive communication between parents and teens about sexuality. Be sure to pick up one of the **LET'S TALK Month** calendars now available. This calendar provides information on community events which help parents and teens become more comfortable communicating with each other. Let's Talk. For more information, call....
- ▶ October is national **LET'S TALK Month**... a time to promote parent and child communication and community education about sexuality. Parents are among the primary sexuality educators of their children. Learn how to be an askable parent and talk to your children about sex. For more information and a list of **LET'S TALK** programs, call.....

## MEDIA



## Television PSAs

*Breaking the Cycle's* television PSAs were developed by *Breaking the Cycle's* Public Awareness Work Group with writing assistance from Fox 61/WTIC-TV. The PSAs were produced by Fox 61/WTIC-TV.

### Script: English version

- Voice-over:** Talking about sex with your child is never easy. Finding the right words can be... difficult.
- Mother:** So let's review: the birds...
- Father:** Bees.
- Mother:** The birds...
- Father:** Bees.
- Mother:** The birds...
- Father:** Bees.
- Voice-over:** Our kids lives are filled with tests. Make this one test your kids don't have to take. Talk to your child. It's the best way to prevent teen pregnancy. Not sure what to say? For help and information, call Infoline: 1-800-203-1234.

### Script: Spanish version:

- Voice-over:** Hablar de sexo con sus niños nunca es fácil. Encontrar las palabras correctas puede ser difícil.
- Mother:** Tenemos que hablar sobre las cosas de la vida...
- Father:** Tu mamá quiere hablarte sobre las cosas de la vida.
- Mother:** Tenemos que hablarte sobre las cosas de la vida.
- Father:** Tu mamá...
- Voice-over:** Las vidas de nuestros niños están llenas de exámenes. Asegúrese que este no sea un examen que sus niños tengan que tomar. Hablando con sus niños es la mejor forma de prevenir el embarazo juvenil. ¿No sabe que decir? Para ayuda, llame a Infoline a 1-800-203-1234.

## MEDIA

**United Way of the Capital Area**

30 Laurel Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1341 • Telephone (860) 493-6800  
Administrative Fax (860) 493-6809 • Community Services Fax (860) 493-1199

**Breaking the Cycle #2**

Many parents remember learning about the facts of life on the street.

I'm George Bahamonde, president of United Way of the Capital Area.

Certain subjects, such as sex are too important to be left to the streets. Yes, talking about sex with your child is not easy. However, it just may be the best thing you can do to prevent teen pregnancy.

National research shows that good communication reduces risky behavior and makes children less likely to become teen parents. That's why United Way has joined with *Breaking the Cycle*, Hartford's teen pregnancy prevention campaign to encourage better parent-child communication.

Not sure what to say? Don't worry, we can help you start the conversation. For more information, call Infoline at 1-800-203-1234. Because as a parent, you are the most effective teen pregnancy prevention program.

This message was brought to you by United Way and this radio station.  
In partnership because . . . *good things happen in communities that care.*

## MEDIA

---



---

# WATAUGA DEMOCRAT

Established 1888

Executive Editor  
Armfield Coffey

Editor  
Sandra Shook

Managing Editor  
Tim Smith

Publisher  
Rachel Rivers-Coffey



*By maintaining an independent editorial policy, we are able to set aside our personal ideologies in favor of free and diversified thought. Our foremost policy is to let the people's voices be heard.*

## Editorials

---

### DON'T LOOK THE OTHER WAY

---

## Teen sex

One of the more startling findings of a survey of Watauga County ninth-graders is that nearly one in four say they have had sexual intercourse.

That finding was contained in a survey initiated by the Watauga County Coalition for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy and supported by the Lutheran Brotherhood; 23 percent of ninth-graders surveyed said they had had sex at least once.

It's probably a natural reaction to dismiss that report as hyperbole; it's not unknown for 15-year-olds, after all, to engage in a certain amount of exaggeration when it comes to matters of sex. But what cannot be so easily dismissed is the painful fact that plenty of teen-agers in America, North Carolina and, yes, Watauga County are having sex.

More than half a million teen girls give birth each year in the United States. In North Carolina, more than 25,000 teens become pregnant annually — including hundreds who have not yet seen a ninth-grade classroom. Last year, teen pregnancies in the state increased 7 percent, with 16,676 babies born to girls aged 10 to 19. That means thousands of other pregnancies ended in abortion.

Most teens, of course, are completely unprepared emotionally and financially for parenthood. Three-fourths of the babies of teen mothers are born out of wedlock, and their prospects in life are at best uncertain.

Solving this complex problem will not be easy, but the first step is to recognize that a problem exists. Awareness of the extent of teen pregnancy must be heightened, and that is just what the coalition is trying to do. It is coordinating efforts during October for "Family Sexuality Awareness Month," in which parents will be encouraged to talk with their children about human sexuality.

Ongoing education efforts also need to be expanded in the schools to teach students more about sex, parenthood, accountability and responsibility. Too many teen-agers obviously know about sex; what they haven't seemed to learn are the consequences.

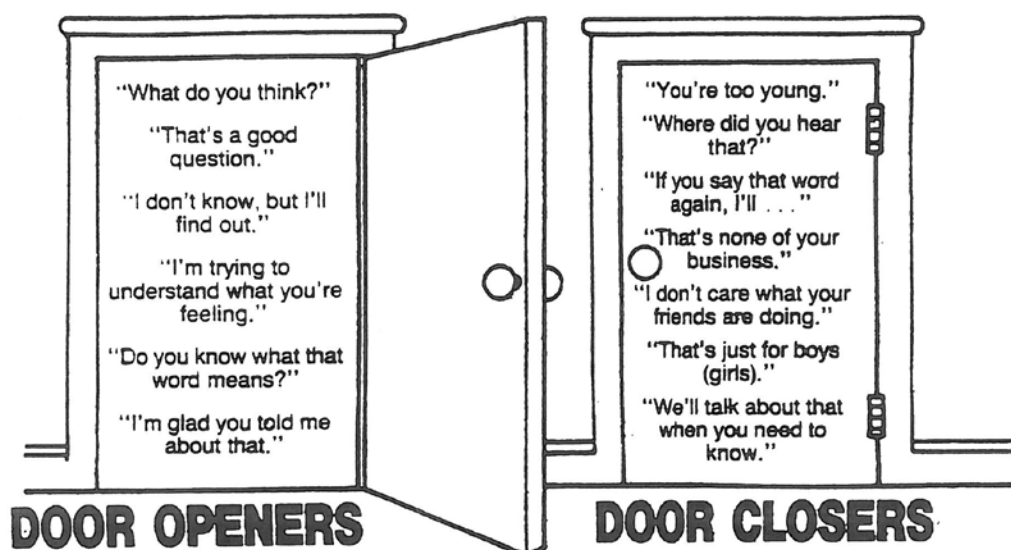
Reprinted with permission 6/18/97

GROCERY BAG  
PAPER & PLASTIC

MEDIA

# LET'S TALK OCTOBER 1988

NATIONAL FAMILY SEXUALITY EDUCATION MONTH



## BE ASKABLE



### Harris Teeter

*The Only Low Price Supermarket...  
That Refuses To Act Like One!*

## WALLET CARD

**Parent-Child Communication: Ten Tips For Success:**

1. Encourage communication by reassuring kids that they can talk to you about anything.
  2. Take advantage of teachable moments. A friend's pregnancy, news article, or a TV show can help start a conversation.
  3. Listen more than talk. Think about what you're being asked. Confirm with your child that what you heard is in fact what he/she meant to say.
  4. Don't jump to conclusions, the fact that teens ask about sex does not mean that they are having or thinking about having sex.
  5. Answer questions simply and directly, give factual, honest, short and simple answers.
  6. Respect your child's views. Share your thoughts and values and help your children to express theirs.
- 
7. Reassure young people that their feelings are normal.
  8. Teach your children ways to make good decisions about sex and coach them on how to get out of risky situations.
  9. Admit when you don't know the answer to a question, suggest that the two of you find the answer together on the internet or in the library.
  10. Discuss that at times your teen may feel more comfortable talking with someone other than you. Together think of other trusted adults with whom they can talk.

(Source: Advocates For Youth 2001)

**Hug Your Child Daily!**

Better Beginnings Coalition of the Roanoke Valley, Inc.  
 (BBC) has been devoted to the prevention of adolescent pregnancy and to promoting better outcomes for those teens who do become pregnant, since its beginning in 1984. If you are interested in joining the BBC, please contact Maureen Collins, 7 Albermarle Ave.  
 Roanoke, VA 24016  
 Phone 540-985-9898  
 Fax: 540-982-3449  
 E-mail: mcollins@cartillon.com

**Better Beginnings Coalition of the Roanoke Valley, Inc.**

**Your children want you to talk to them about  
 Love, Sex and Relationships**

**Don't Let Them Down!**



# There's No Place Like Home

FLYER



## ...For Sex Education To Begin.

### PARENTS: IT'S TIME TO TALK

#### *LISTEN*

- Share Your Beliefs, Concerns and Values
  - Use Correct Terms
- Be Honest, Avoid Myths and Fables

#### *LISTEN*

- Look for Teachable Moments
- Reassure Your Kids That They Are Normal
- Start Early...but It's Never Too Late

#### *LISTEN*

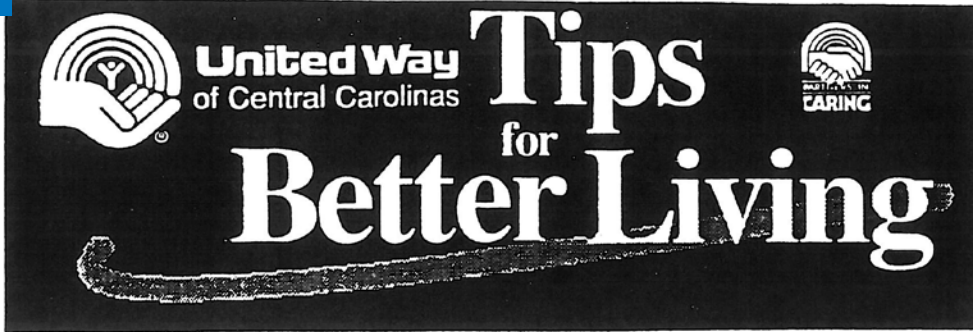
Recognize That The Media, Peers And Religion Are Major Influences As Well.

FOR LOCAL PROGRAMS CALL:



2000 M St NW, Ste 750 | Washington, DC 20036 USA | P: 202.419.3420 | F: 202.419.1448  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)

## FLYER



## WHAT PARENTS CAN DO To Teach Your Children About Sexuality

- **SHARE YOUR BELIEFS, CONCERNS AND VALUES.** Your children need to know where you stand.
- **LET YOUR CHILDREN KNOW THEY CAN TRUST YOU** and come to you even when they make mistakes.
- **ANSWER QUESTIONS HONESTLY.** Tell your children what they want to know using words they can understand.
- **BE PATIENT.** The same questions may be asked again and again.
- **START CONVERSATIONS.** Some children never ask about sex.
- **DO NOT USE MYTHS OR FABLES.** Don't talk about animals and plants when your child wants to talk about people.
- **INFORM YOUR CHILD ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT** in the same manner you would warn them about other dangers.
- **HELP YOUR CHILDREN LEARN HOW TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS,** and how to stand by their decisions.

*The Mecklenburg Council on Adolescent Pregnancy  
works to facilitate and promote community efforts  
in adolescent pregnancy prevention  
and related health issues.*

*For more information, call*

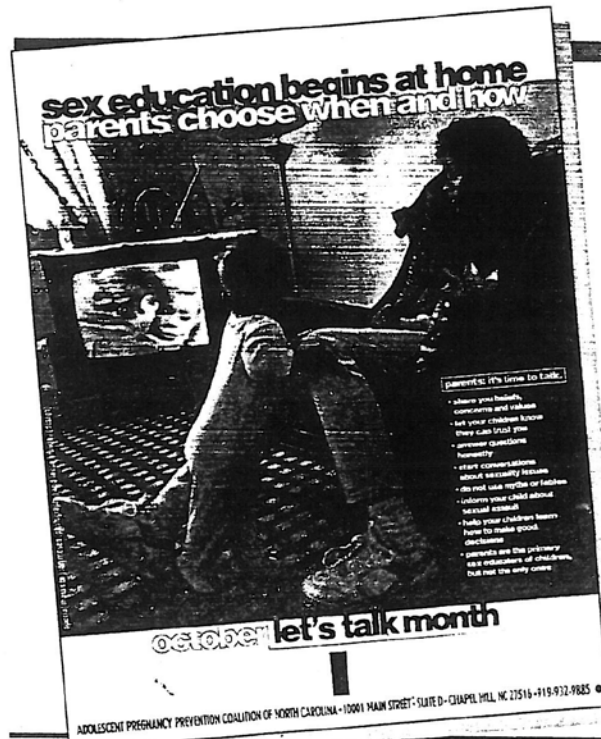
# 332-6721

# the Advocate



**ADOLESCENT  
PREGNANCY  
PREVENTION**

Coalition of North Carolina



**NEWSLETTER**

It's  
Let's Talk  
Month!

## Lowest Teen Pregnancy Rate in 19 Years 22,095 Pregnancies in 1996

The 1996 North Carolina teen pregnancy rate continued a gradual decline which began in 1991. Out of every thousand girls ages 15 to 19, 89.8 became pregnant in 1996. In 1990, there were 105.4 pregnancies per thousand. The 1996 rate is the lowest since accurate data collection began in 1978. These rates are calculated by the State Center for Health Statistics.

The rate for girls age 10 to 14 is also at its lowest point. 2.8 out of every 1000 teens aged 10 to 14 became pregnant in 1996.

"We are thrilled about our progress," said Linda Riggsbee, President of APPCNC. "At the same time, don't forget that 22,095 teens struggled with the challenges of a pregnancy in 1996."

County rates are available. Call Connie Phillips at APPCNC at 1-919-932-9885.

### What's Inside

Grounded for LIFE?!

- page 2

Events of Interest

- page 3

Making a Difference

- page 3

APPCNC Calendar

- page 4

Sex and Kids: What a Nervous Parent Needs to Know

- page 5

Poster Contest

- page 6

Legislation, Policy and the Law

- page 7

Talking with Kids About Tough Issues

- page 8

volume TWELVE

number THREE

FALL 1997

## NEWSLETTER

Alabama Campaign to  
**Prevent Teen Pregnancy**  
www.acptp.org

**eNEWSLETTER**

October is **Let's Talk Month**, which emphasizes the importance of communication between adults and youth in helping young people develop responsible attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. More information about **Let's Talk Month** can be found at the following links:

[Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy](#)

[Advocates for Youth](#)

[National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

*The Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy's eNewsletter provides links to articles and websites with information on current events, research, funding opportunities and other items related to teen pregnancy prevention. The inclusion of this information does not imply endorsement by the Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (ACPTP) and the opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the official position, policies or views of ACPTP.*

Alabama Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy • 412 N. Hull Street • Montgomery, Alabama 36104  
334-265-8004 (phone) • 334-265-8033 (fax) • [asmith@acptp.org](mailto:asmith@acptp.org) • [www.acptp.org](http://www.acptp.org)

## NEWSLETTER

**Subject:** Let's Talk Month 2007 Newsletter



## Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting

### Let's Talk Month 2007 Newsletter

---

#### What is Let's Talk Month?

Let's Talk Month (October) is a national campaign that *promotes parents as their children's primary sexual health educators*. The campaign first started in 1975 as the National Family Sexuality Education Week (NFSEW) by Dr. Sol Gordon, a professor of sociology at Syracuse University. It was intended to be a week long social awareness and education campaign to help colleagues and organizations support parents in their role as the primary sexuality educators of their children. Washington D.C. based organization Advocates for Youth has since taken the lead nationally to promote what is now called Let's Talk Month (LTM).

MOAPPP takes the lead in Minnesota to promote Let's Talk Month and invites schools, communities of faith, community-based agencies, media and businesses across the state to join in by providing activities, resources and educational programs that will bring young people together with their parents to talk about sexual health topics. Visit the Let's Talk Month section of MOAPPP's website for more information about Let's Talk Month.

#### Become a Let's Talk Month Partner

Let's talk Month is an opportunity for you to demonstrate to the public your commitment to the health and well-being of Minnesota's young people. The Let's Talk Month campaign promotes the belief that young people need to receive accurate and reliable sexual health information. It also creates the awareness that kids want to learn about sex from their parents and that parents actually do have the most influence over their children's decisions about sex. If you have always wanted to get the parents of the young people who you serve involved in your programming, Let's Talk Month is the perfect jumping off point! Your organization's participation will give the campaign a greater reach and will get its key messages in front of more people. More young people will receive the

information and support they need to become healthy and contributing adults. Contact Jocelyn at MOAPPP at [jocelyn@moappp.org](mailto:jocelyn@moappp.org) or 651-644-1447 x19 to find out how to become a partner today!

### **Let's Talk Month Posters**

Order a Let's Talk Month poster from MOAPPP for \$5.00 (includes S&H). Display the poster in a high-traffic area that parents are sure to see. Promote the important message that parents "make a difference" in their children's sexual health and are their primary sexuality educators. Contact Jocelyn at [jocelyn@moappp.org](mailto:jocelyn@moappp.org) or 651-644-1447 x19 to order.

### **The Talk - A Great Let's Talk Month Activity!**

Purchase The Youth Performance Company's *The Talk* on DVD and the accompanying 22-page discussion guide (developed in collaboration with the West Suburban Teen Clinic) for \$39.95 (plus S&H). This DVD is guaranteed to promote "the facts" in a fun and innovative way. The discussion guide offers an excellent springboard for discussions between teens and the trusted adults in their lives about puberty, sexuality and relationships. Facilitators are able to choose scenes that are most appropriate for their groups or play the movie in its entirety. Call YPC at 612-623-9180 to order or for more information.

### **Not to Be Missed...**

**October 4, 2007**

**How do I TALK to my kids about the BIRDS and the BEES?**

7:00 - 8:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.)  
 Ridgedale Hennepin County Library  
 12601 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka  
 Free Admission

Robie H. Harris, educator and award-winning author of *It's NOT the Stork! It's So Amazing!* and *It's Perfectly Normal*, will present age appropriate recommendations on how parents can accurately and comfortably discuss nearly every question about birth, babies, bodies, families and healthy sexuality. For parents of children from toddlers to teens! There will be time for questions and answers and for book signing with the author. Contact Jocelyn at [jocelyn@moappp.org](mailto:jocelyn@moappp.org) or 651-644-1447 x19 with questions or see the event flyer. (PDF)

**October 5, 2007**

**It's NOT the Kids! It's US! Whose Responsibility is it to Educate Our Kids and Teens about Sexual Health?**

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
 Temple Israel  
 2324 Emerson Avenue, Minneapolis  
 Fee: \$15, includes lunch

The "who, what, when, where and why" of sharing sexual health information with our young people continues to be controversial in this country and can wear down

even the most committed health educator. Enjoy an informal lunch conversation with award-winning and internationally acclaimed children and teen sexual health book author Robie Harris. Her comments will inspire and renew participants' energy and commitment to the important work of sexual health education. For more information about this event, see the [flyer \(PDF\)](#) or contact Jocelyn at [jocelyn@moappp.org](mailto:jocelyn@moappp.org) or 651-644-1447 x19.

---

MOAPPP's mission is to develop and strengthen policies and programs that promote adolescent sexual health, prevent adolescent pregnancy and support adolescent parents.

---

Forward this newsletter to your colleagues - they will appreciate that you did! Free subscriptions to the MOAPPP's electronic newsletters can be entered at MOAPPP's home page.

---

**Minnesota Organization on Adolescent  
Pregnancy, Prevention & Parenting (MOAPPP)**  
1619 Dayton Avenue, Suite 111, St. Paul, MN 55104  
Twin Cities 651-644-1447 • Toll-free 800-657-3697 • [moappp@moappp.org](mailto:moappp@moappp.org)

## BROCHURE

# HOW TO START TALKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT SEX

## SOME SUGGESTIONS...

- ◆ Get to know your children's world. Be a part of it.
- ◆ Let them know what you value and set good examples.
- ◆ Respect their privacy.
- ◆ Be clear about how you feel and then share your thoughts.
- ◆ Use correct language when referring to sexual organs and behavior.
- ◆ Give them honest answers.
- ◆ If you don't know the answer let them know and go find out together.
- ◆ Even if they don't ask questions about sexuality take advantage of special moments to ask questions or talk about it.
- ◆ Remember that body language, facial expression and voice tone is just as important. Keep it consistent with what you are saying.
- ◆ Do not criticize or lecture. Listen to what they have to say.



Child Welfare League of America, Campaign for Our Teens, 1995  
Funded by Pacific Mutual Foundation.  
Adopted from Campaign for Our Children, Inc.

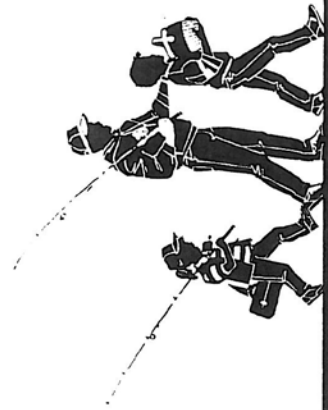
## DO YOUR HOME WORK

It is very easy to become a parent. It is much harder to become a good one. But the fact that you are reading this pamphlet shows that you care and want to do better. Of course, this is only a beginning. If you really want to make a difference in your children's sexual education engage in their lives and talk to them.

The best way to get information is actually talking to your children. However we know that talking with adolescents is not always so easy. Nonetheless parents have found that when they begin an open and honest dialogue with their children about sex that the communication among family members improve all the way around.

**If you need more information about sexuality and communication with adolescents look for guidance from:**

- Books in your Public Library.
- Pamphlets and advice from the Health Department.
- Classes through the Adult Education Program in your School District.
- Specific programs for adolescents and parents through local or national organizations, groups or religious affiliations.



## HOW TO START TALKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT SEX

It's a different world today. Kids are growing up faster. Television, movies, magazines and music videos are bombarding our children with thousands of sexual messages a day. But that's not the only

reason why more than one million U.S. teenagers will end up pregnant this year. Or why 60% of U.S. teens will have experienced sexual intercourse before their 18th birthday.

Another important reason is that many parents don't know how to talk to their children about sexuality. They feel

uncomfortable. They're not sure what to say or when to say it. If this sounds like you, hopefully this pamphlet will give you some ideas on how to start having a one-to-one conversation with your child about sex.



## GET TO KNOW YOUR CHILDREN

It's hard to talk about sexuality with someone you never talk to. So if you're not having a good talk with your kids every day, start making time for it. Ask them about school, their friends, their teachers. Turn off the television and find out what's going on in their world. If you start early and have regular talks with your children, talking about sexuality will be just like any other conversation.

## BEGIN EARLY

If you think 14 or 15 is a good age to begin talking about these things, think again. The dramatic rise in teen pregnancy has revealed that girls are having sex at 14. Boys are starting at 12. Obviously, we have to start talking to our children at an earlier age. Many experts believe 10 years of age isn't too early. But whatever age you think is right, the important thing is to start talking before your children become sexually active.

## TALK TALK TALK

What do you say? How do you say it? It's not easy. But you can make it easier if you prepare for it. Ask yourself what you wanted to know when you were a kid. Write it down. Know what you want to say. Then set aside some time and talk one-to-one. Wherever you feel comfortable. When the time comes use direct language. Call a penis, a penis. A vagina, a vagina. Once your children know that you're willing to have an open and honest conversation about sexual intercourse, the dialogue will flow naturally. If you are not sure of when to start take advantage of particular moments—"teachable moments", when the opportunity presents itself. Whether using an article from a paper, a word in a song, or a program on television. Say something that lets them know you are willing to talk about it. The hardest part, most of the time, is getting started.

## SPEAK YOUR MIND

If you don't want your kids to have sexual intercourse, tell them. Tell them there's a time for everything. Right now, their time should be spent doing school work. Enjoying family and friends. Setting goals that will help them get everything they want out of life. By taking a stand on sexuality, your children will respect you. Believe it or not, you are the most powerful influence in their lives. What you say carries more weight than what their friends, teachers or anyone else may say. So tell them what you think.

## NOW LISTEN

Communication is a two-way street. You have had your chance to speak, now it's your child's turn. Let them say what they feel. Let them question your beliefs. That way they will know they're allowed to express themselves, without fear of losing your love. Or feeling that they're doing something wrong. Try to understand where they're coming from and really listen. Do not lecture or criticize. It's the only way your discussion can lead to understanding and agreement.

## HEARD ENOUGH?

Then do something about it. If you really care about your kids, you will keep them busy. Busy kids don't have time to drop out of school, take drugs or get pregnant. So encourage your kids to join little league, the school band, church choir or the neighborhood community center. And then join them. Become a basketball coach, a PTA or community center volunteer or a Scout leader. Whatever you do, become involved. Your involvement shows what you value and that you really care. And that can make all the difference in the world.

## BROCHURE



# Padres:

# Es tiempo de hablar



Para programas locales llame a:



(Rompiendo la cadena de niños procreado niños procreado niños)

Para mayor información sobre  
adiestramientos y recursos  
para padres y otros adultos  
que trabajan con jóvenes  
llámenos al:

(860) 236-4872

Este mensaje llega a ustedes  
en colaboración con:



**United Way**  
of the Capital Area

*Rompiendo la cadena* es una colaboración a la comunidad  
de la Ciudad de Hartford, el Hartford Action Plan on Infant  
Health y las Escuelas Públicas de Hartford

## ¡Hablemos!

Diez consejos para padres de:

*Hablando con los niños  
sobre asuntos delicados\**

1. Comience temprano
2. Inicie conversaciones con sus hijos e hijas
3. ...¡inclusive sobre sexo y sexualidad!
4. Cree un ambiente de confianza
5. Comuníquese con sus propios valores
6. Escuche a sus hijos/as
7. Siempre sea honesto
8. Tenga paciencia
9. Utilice la televisión como un medio de aprendizaje
10. Hable sobre el tema otra vez...  
... y otra vez

\* auspiciado por The Henry J. Kaiser  
Family Foundation & Children NOW

## CONSEJOS PARA LA BUENA COMUNICACIÓN

Los padres son los mejores educadores sobre la sexualidad para sus hijos e hijas.

Los padres desean ser los mejores educadores sobre el tema del sexo, pero puede ser que no siempre entienden como hacerlo bien.

Los niños quieren recibir la educación sobre el sexo de sus padres o encargados.

Usted puede ser un padre a quien se le pueda preguntar, un padre preocupado y un sabio consejero.

**¡HÁBLELE A SUS HIJOS  
...comience ahora!**

### MENSAJES IMPORTANTES:

Todos nosotros estamos creciendo y cambiando a lo largo de toda nuestras vidas.

Todo el mundo se desarrolla a su propio modo.

Tu modo es único, especial, y válido.

Tu cuerpo es privado y merece respeto.

La sexualidad es un regalo hermoso—algo que se debe manejar sabiamente

**Hable del tema claramente.** Evite los cuentos, explicaciones confusas y las mentiras al hablar sobre la concepción y el nacimiento.

**Hable sobre las personas.** El hablar solamente sobre animales cuando sus hijos quieren saber sobre la gente los confunde.

**Escuche a su hijo(a).** Cuando su hijo(a) se le acerque con una pregunta o preocupación, deténgase y escuche. Controle su reacción inmediata (susto, consejo, soluciones) mientras realmente averigua lo que le está tratando de decir.

**Ofrezca explicaciones sencillas.** Utilice nombres apropiados para las partes y funciones del cuerpo. Los niños necesitan un vocabulario que puedan usar cuando hablen de sus sentimientos, ideas y preocupaciones.

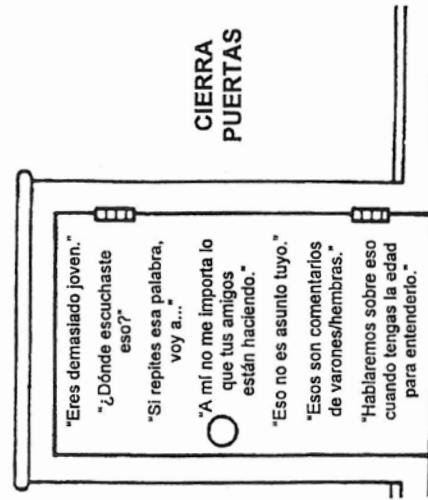
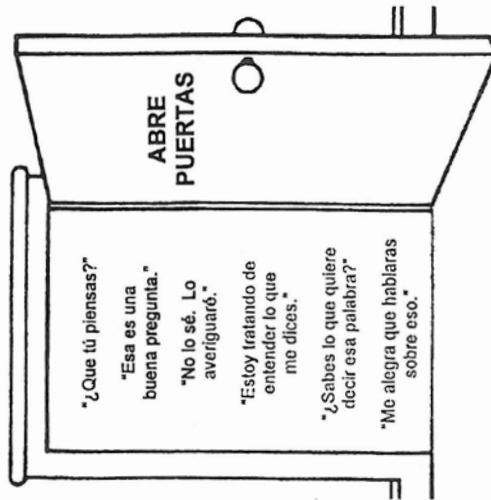
**Muestre interés.** Si es posible, deje lo que está haciendo, acérquese al niño y baje a su nivel.

**Tenga paciencia.** Espere que las mismas preguntas y preocupaciones surjan de nuevo. A los niños se les hace difícil entender cierta información. Muchas veces necesitan que se les hable continuamente sobre los cambios por los cuales están pasando.

**Conozca el ambiente en que se desenvuelven sus hijos(as).** Chistes comunes, la televisión y programas de noticias que están viendo, su música—todo lo anterior le proveerá muchas oportunidades para conversar sobre los asuntos de la sexualidad.

**Inicio el tema.** Trate ideas sobre el tema de vez en cuando para darles el mensaje de que usted está interesado en hablar sobre la sexualidad. Puede que su hijo(a) no conteste, pero eso no necesariamente significa que lo sabe todo o que no quiere hablar sobre el tema.

**Mantenga la puerta abierta.** Demuéstrele a su hijo que está disponible para otras conversaciones o preguntas sobre la sexualidad.



## MEMO INSERT

## STOKES COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



To: Ministers  
Youth Services Coordinators

From: Crystal Motlasz, M.S., CHES  
Health Educator

Re: Let's Talk Month

October is Let's Talk Month and is sponsored by the North Carolina Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy. The purpose of this month long event is to encourage communication between parents and their children about sexuality and other adolescent concerns.

Today's youth often encounter challenges that may have an everlasting impact on their life. Parents and families should and can still be the most powerful and positive force upon the young despite influence from peers and the mass media.

Children and young adults may act like they "know it all" about sex but many times the information they receive is only partially or not correct. Despite their "know it all" attitude 93 Stokes County teenaged girls became pregnant in 1992! Two of these pregnancies were to a 13 and a 14 year old. Unplanned pregnancies can result in dropping out of school, financial burden to families and the community at large and the loss of a teen's chance for a bright future.

Churches have an important role in our community and I would like your congregation to be involved in Let's Talk month. Some suggestions are to have a sermon on sexuality and family values, an article in your weekly bulletin or to sponsor a program for your youth and adult Sunday School classes.

I have enclosed the solutions from teens on how churches can promote delaying sexual activity from the Bowman Gray School of Medicine, Wake Forest University, Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy Problems project. A binder called "A Child Is Born" from the Governor's Commission on Reduction of Infant Mortality is available by contacting me at 593-2400. The binder offers Sunday School/sermon lesson plans based on scripture that can be used to encourage women and teenage girls who are pregnant to seek early prenatal care. There is no cost for the binder.

Please feel free to call me for more information and other resources.



## October is Let's Talk Month Sow the Seeds of Conversation

20036-3353 

### Don't Forget! Now is the Time to Talk With Your Children.

*According to Common Sense: Teens and Adults Speak  
out About Teen Pregnancy in the District of Columbia:*

- District residents agree that parents should initiate discussions about sex;
- 56 percent of parents say they discuss sexual topics with their children;
- 32 percent of pre-teens and teens say their parents discuss sexual topics with them;
- 46 percent of children are comfortable talking with their parents about sexual issues; and
- 78 percent of adults say they are very comfortable talking with their children about sexual issues.

*It's time  
to change the  
conversation.*

**DC  
Campaign  
to Prevent  
Teen Pregnancy®**

[www.teenpregnancydc.org](http://www.teenpregnancydc.org) • (202) 789-4666

# NATIONAL LET'S TALK MONTH. . .

## *promoting* Common Ground

Let's Talk Month is a national public education campaign celebrated in October and coordinated by Advocates for Youth. Let's Talk is an opportunity for youth, parents, parent groups, schools, health providers, community agencies, and religious institutions to plan activities which encourage parent/child communication about sexuality.

As part of the celebration, the Colorado Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy Parenting and Prevention (COAPPP) is launching the **Common Ground Campaign**.

The goal of the campaign is to get youth, parents, trusted adults, youth serving agencies and community agencies involved in discussions about sexuality. We are bridging the gap that exists around this seemingly uncomfortable topic.

We want your artistic submissions (including artwork, poetry, photography and quotes) to reflect how we can bring adults and youth together to talk about issues surrounding teen sexual health and give adults and their youth tips to discuss teen sexual behavior. How can we impact teen sexual health and involve adults in the topic?



**Prizes for the top submissions will be awarded. Complete the submission form and return with the original or copy of your work to:**

COAPPP  
2785 N. Speer Blvd. Suite 348.  
Denver CO 80211.

**Deadline is October 31, 2007.**

Questions about the campaign can be addressed to Darren Whitfield at:  
303.225.8870 or [dwhitfield@coappp.org](mailto:dwhitfield@coappp.org)

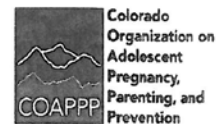
.....  
*All submissions must include your name, city, age, school or organization, e-mail and/or phone number. Submissions become the property of COAPPP and may be used in other publications. We will not use full names in publications.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency or School: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



*Thank you for supporting Let's Talk Month. Together we can work to create **Common Ground** for youth and parents to talk about sexual health.*

**PAYCHECK INSERT**  
**Monroe Schools**

*"Communities Make  
Effective Schools"*

Dear Parent(s) and Guardians (s) of Elementary Students:

You are the primary educators for your children. Each year in October, the North Carolina Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy coordinates a statewide celebration of "Let's Talk Month." This year the emphasis is on "Parents: It's Time To Talk!"

The enclosures are for your information to use with your children only if you choose. These flyers are designed to help parents become comfortable and confident sharing knowledge about sexuality, and help young children in developing values that show respect, caring and commitment.

This information has been placed in a sealed envelope for your child/children to bring home to you.

It is a fact that young people will make more mistakes out of misinformation and ignorance than from sexual knowledge and awareness! Just as in all other areas of growing up, children need guidance and information from parents.

Sincerely,

*Vicki E. Klaas*

Vicki E. Klaas, M.Ed., R.H.Ed.  
Health Education Coordinator

mjw

Enclosures 4

Office of the Superintendent  
Sixth Floor Union County Courthouse Monroe, N.C. 28112-4794

TABLE MAT

# Let's Eat, Let's Talk . . . Let's see where it takes us!

**Let's Talk!**  
**¡Hablemos!**

**What are three things you can do to be healthy?**

**What do you wish our family did more often?**

**How can a parent and a child/teen show respect to each other?**

**When you think about your future, what are you looking forward to?**

**What are you worried about?**

**What is one of your favorite things about – being outdoors? – being at home? – being at school or work? – being with friends?**

**What helps a person be a good parent?**

**How have you changed in the last year?**

**What's your favorite thing to wear? Why?**

**What do you like best about yourself right now?**

**Think of someone you look up to. What does that person do that you admire?**

**Describe a time when things didn't go the way you wanted. What did you learn?**

**What can you do to be a good friend?**

**What do you like about being your age?**

**What is one of the big influences in your life?**

**What can you do tomorrow to help someone else?**

**Think of a rule in our family. How is it helpful to you? How is it difficult for you?**

**Think of a time when you disagreed with what someone said or did. What happened? What did you learn?**

**What are three things you like about me?**

**What are you thankful for?**

**Share one of your favorite family memories.**

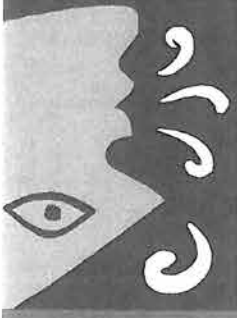
**Describe what you did today that was – fun – useful – new – important.**

**If you were in trouble, scared, or upset, who would you talk to? How could I help you talk about it?**

**If you were a food, what would you be and why? What animal would you be? What color would you be?**

For more information and resources, go to:  
[www.ppmns.org/letstalk](http://www.ppmns.org/letstalk)

**Planned Parenthood®**  
Serving Minnesota • North Dakota • South Dakota  
WOMEN'S HEALTH MATTERS



# Let's Talk Month

## October

Let's Talk Month is a community campaign that supports parents in making stronger connections with their children and in talking honestly and openly about sexual health and relationships.

### How to use this tablemat:

1. Put it in the middle of your table.
2. At mealtime, take turns reading a question for everyone to answer.
3. See where it takes you!

Research shows that when families share a meal three times a week (or more), children feel more connected within their family. This feeling of connection *actually motivates youth to make healthier choices as they grow!*

This tablemat is:

- For all ages – Pre-schoolers to teenagers to parents to grandparents.
- For all families – It helps you talk about your own family's values.
- Meant to be used over and over – Conversations will change from day-to-day and year-to-year.

Planned Parenthood works year round in communities across our region to offer educational programming that supports and strengthens parents and families. Contact us for more information about parent-child retreats and PASE events (Parents Are Sexuality Educators).

612-821-6198 or [education@ppmn.org](mailto:education@ppmn.org).

**Planned Parenthood**  
Serving Minnesota • North Dakota • South Dakota  
WOMEN'S HEALTH MATTERS

## COUPON

Caldwell Council on Adolescent Health

*Help Support The Caldwell Council  
On Adolescent Health*

**50¢**  
Off

Just present this coupon on your next visit to Western Steer® Family Restaurant and get a 50¢ discount on any regularly priced entree item. You'll enjoy a great meal at 50¢ savings, and at the same time, you will be helping to support the Caldwell Council on Adolescent Health. For each coupon redeemed, the nice folks at Western Steer® will donate 50¢ to help us in our mission of promoting healthy lifestyles in the adolescents of Caldwell County. The more coupons Western Steer® receives, the more money we will receive. So please . . . visit Western Steer® and help support our cause.

*Thanks!*

Coupon valid only at these Western Steer® locations: Blowing Rock Blvd. (Lenoir) & Hwy. 321 S (Hudson).  
OFFER EXPIRES NOVEMBER 12, 1991 (One coupon per person, please.)

© 1991 Western Steer Inc.  
WSPR Printing

**CONTEST**

# POSTER CONTEST

*SPONSORED BY*

**Albemarle Family Life Council  
Albemarle Arts Council  
Local Merchants of Elizabeth City**

**SUBJECT:** Communication between Parents and their children

**JUDGING  
CRITERIA:** Creativity, Originality, Neatness,  
Clarity of Message (words or pictures),  
Student's Name/Teacher/School/Grade  
(These need to be on the back of artwork)

**MEDIA:** Any media may be used including collage art pieces.  
Judges ask that art be on paper no larger than poster  
board or no smaller than 8 1/2 X 11 1/2.

**DEADLINE:** October 18, 1991.  
Send all art to Susanne Sifford at the central office.

**PRIZES:** A prize will be presented to the BEST design in grades  
K-3, 4-6, 7-12. Presentations will be made on October  
22, 1991 at the College of the Albemarle Building B at  
7:00 p.m.

***HOSTED BY:***  
**College of the Albemarle**

**CONTEST**

ESSAY CONTESTS FOR  
LET'S TALK MONTH  
IN OCTOBER

The month of October is designated in North Carolina as Let's Talk Month. During this month, activities and programs are given in counties to promote improved parent/teen communication. In observance of this month, the Burke Coalition on Adolescent Health is sponsoring essay contests for Burke County Teens and their Parents. Teens and Parents are asked to compose essays on the following subjects:

- (1) "What I would like my Parents to know about Teenagers"
- (2) "What I would like my Teenager(s) to know about Parents"

These essays should be limited to two handwritten pages. Entries should be received by OCTOBER 4, 1991. The entries may be sent to:

Burke Coalition on Adolescent Health  
c/o Rebecca McLeod, Secretary  
P.O. Drawer 1266  
Morganton, NC 28655

Entries will be judged by members of the Education Committee of the Burke Coalition on Adolescent Health on October 11, 1991. Winners will be notified the week of October 14, 1991. Prizes will be awarded to winners in both categories. The winning entries will be published in the News Herald during the Month of October.

For more information call Rebecca McLeod at 433-4295.

-----  
(DETACH AND STAPLE TO EACH ENTRY)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Category of Entrant: Teen \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_

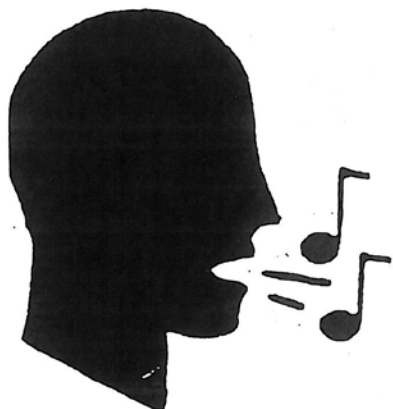
Sex of Entrant: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ U

Age of Teen Entrant: \_\_\_\_\_

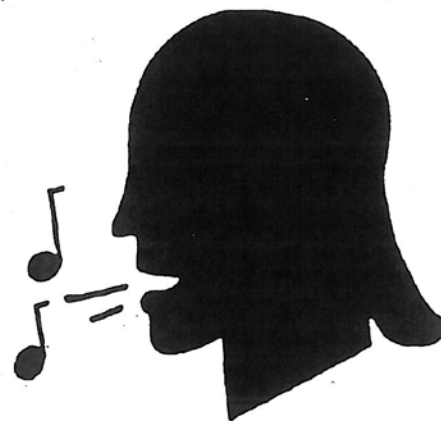
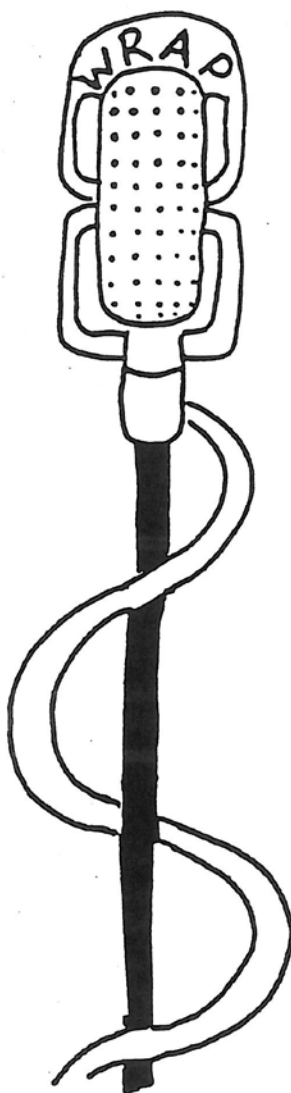
# TEEN FEST '88

CONTEST

FEATURING A DISCO and  
**RAPPING CONTEST** for cash prizes  
 ( ON PLANNING FOR SUCCESS )



*Males Compete  
 Against Males*



*Females Compete  
 Against Females*

## GUEST DISC JOCKEY

From WPEG Radio  
 FM 98  
 Carolina's Hottest!!

## WHEN

DATE: Sat. October 22, 1988  
 TIME: 2:00 - 4:00 P.M.

## PRIZES and FREE REFRESHMENTS

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

3 9 9 - 2 5 0 1 Ext. 236

## BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

Mecklenburg County Health Dept.  
 Charlotte Medical Society  
 WPEG Radio, WGIV Radio Stations  
 Johnston Memorial Y M C A  
 Coca Cola Bottling Company

## WHERE

Johnston Memorial Y M C A  
 3025 N. Davidson Street.  
 Charlotte, N. C.

## RULES: WHO CAN RAP:

Contestant forms are left  
 with support centers, Beatties  
 Ford Rd. Health Dept. & WGIV  
 Radio. ( 2 per center, 1-Male  
 1-Female, 13 - 19 years old)

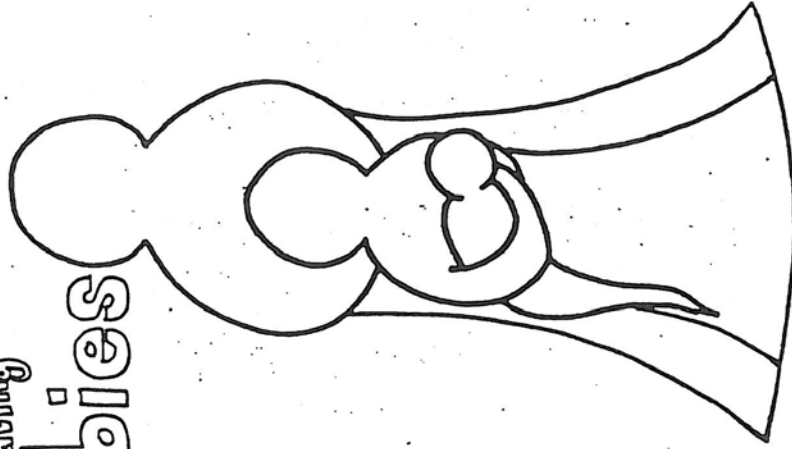
\* DON'T MISS IT \*

TEENAGERS, ages 13-19, THIS IS FOR YOU and IT'S FREE BECAUSE WE CARE !!  
 PS. Please wear tennis shoes or come prepared to dance in your socks. Thanks.

## EVENT

Watauga Coalition For the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy  
and the  
Pioneer Playmakers  
present...

# BABIES having babies



The Pioneer Playmakers dedicate this show  
to the lonely and afraid pregnant teenagers at  
Watauga High School

A Thank You to  
Domino's Pizza  
for it's help

Winner of *The Distinguished Play of the Year Award*  
presented by the American Alliance for Theatre and  
Education

Originally produced for television as  
*A CBS Schoolbreak Special*

Produced by special arrangement with Baker's Plays,  
Boston, MA

Program design by Matt Kadyk

Set dresser ..... David Cress  
Technician

Director ..... Trimella Chaney

Opening Remarks ..... Rose Bridgeman

Performance

Discussion Leaders ..... Rose Bridgeman  
Patsy Edmisten  
WCCPAP

## CAST

Crystal ..... Lisa Kopp  
a 17 year-old preppie

Kelly ..... Jennifer Kent  
an attractive all-American 17 year-old

Max ..... Laura Jones  
a "trashy chic" 16 year-old who speaks her mind

Becky ..... Ann Griffith  
A 14 year-old girl from a low income family who is  
seven months pregnant

Mary Pat ..... Rachel Miller  
a 16 year-old plain looking girl with glasses  
who is 8 months pregnant

Henry ..... Jeff Waller  
the Center's custodian who takes his job seriously

Delivery Boy ..... Bruce Scott  
a 17 year-old hot shot

Mrs. Chapman ..... Trimella Chaney  
a middle-aged pregnancy counselor

## EVENT

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

To: Local Churches and Community Organizations

From: Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of Cleveland County  
Cleveland County Health Department

Re: ***"Let's Talk Cleveland County"***

Date: October 1

October is National Family Sexuality Education Month throughout the country. To celebrate NFSE Month, Governor Martin has proclaimed October as ***"Let's Talk Month"*** in North Carolina.

***"Let's Talk"*** conveys an important message: parents are the primary sexuality educators of their children. The purpose of ***"Let's Talk"*** is to encourage individuals, community organizations and institutions to conduct special events which support parents in their efforts to guarantee children accurate and healthy information about sexuality. Working together, parents and their communities can provide the information and support necessary to prepare today's youth for the responsibilities of tomorrow's adult and family living.

You can participate in this campaign by encouraging members of your organization/institution to attend ***"Let's Talk Cleveland County"*** on Tuesday, October 22, 1991 from 3:30pm until 5:00pm at the Cleveland County Health Department on the second floor in the conference room. Barbara Huberman, Executive Director of the North Carolina Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy, will speak to us on the problem of teen pregnancy in North Carolina and what local communities are doing throughout the state to address the problem.

Please make a special effort to ensure that your organization/institution is well represented at ***"Let's Talk Cleveland County"*** on October 22. Together we can initiate more dialogue that will lead to a better understanding of teen sexuality and to real solutions to the problem of teen pregnancy in our area.

Enclosed you will find data regarding adolescent pregnancy in Cleveland County. Please make additional copies of this information and distribute it throughout your organization/institution.

Thank you!

**EVENT**

***"Can We Talk?"***

***FREE DINNER AND WORKSHOP  
FOR MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS***

***TOPIC: ADOLESCENT SEXUALITY***

***BAPTIST CHURCH OF THE COVENANT  
CORNER OF UNIV. BLVD. AND 22ND STREET SOUTH  
6:00 - 8:30pm***

***ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST REGISTER PRIOR TO WORKSHOP  
DAUGHTER(S) MUST BE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 12 AND 14  
BOTH MOTHER AND DAUGHTER(S) MUST ATTEND  
LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE***

***FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:  
322-2121***

***THIS WORKSHOP IS CO-SPONSORED BY:***

***PLANNED PARENTHOOD OF ALABAMA  
CLERGY FOR SEXUAL RESPONSIBILITY  
DEPARTMENT OF OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY,  
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM***

***DOOR PRIZES WILL BE GIVEN***

**EVENT****TALKING WITH YOUR ADOLESCENT  
ABOUT SEXUALITY****A TWO PART SERIES FOR PARENTS OF ADOLESCENTS**

This program is designed to involve parents in open and supportive discussions dealing with the confusing questions that surround their adolescent's newly emerging sexual identity.

**WHEN:** Monday, October 24 and Tuesday, October 25

**TIME:** 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Benjamin Branch Library  
1530 Benjamin Parkway

**TOPICS INCLUDE:**

October 24 "Physical And Emotional Development of 10 - 15 Year Olds"

Bobby Doolittle, M.D.  
UNCG Student Health Center

Ellen Lancaster, R.N.  
Kiser Middle School

Mary Nelle Smith  
Youth Care, Inc

October 25 "Social Pressures, Communication Skills, and Assertivness Training for Adolescents."

Emilie Hamlow  
Family Life Council of Greater Greensboro, Inc.

Lisa Ramsour  
Family and Children's Service

This program is offered free of charge, but registration is limited.  
Call Family Life Council at 373-1442 for more information.

A United Way Service



CO-SPONSORED BY THE COALITION ON ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY OF THE  
FAMILY LIFE COUNCIL, THE GREENSBORO COUNCIL OF PTA'S  
AND THE GREENSBORO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

EVENT

ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH FOR...

# MANTALK

"SEXUALITY AND RESPONSIBILITY"  
for Males Ages 10-16

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24,

FOOD!

GASTON BOYS' CLUB  
311 N. DALLAS ST.  
GASTONIA

Guest Speaker: Stanley Graham  
from  
Male Clinic, Charlotte

FREE ADMISSION

For More Information Contact:

GASTON BOYS' CLUB 864-5681

FUN!

FACTS!



WHA! K.O. WAR

AN EXTRA SEVEN POUNDS  
COULD KEEP YOU OFF  
THE FOOTBALL TEAM.

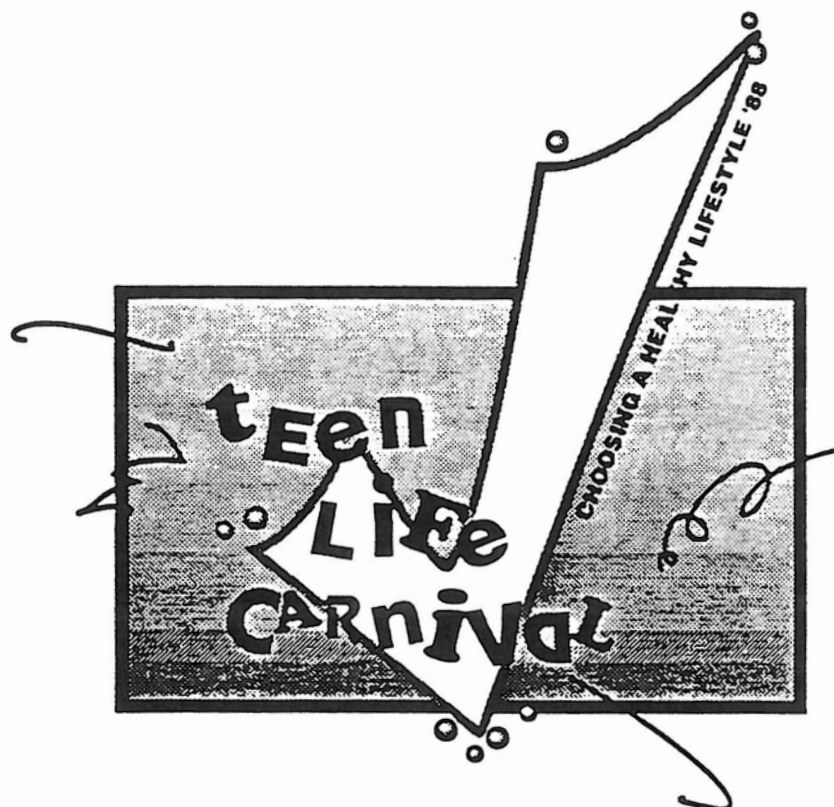
SPONSORED BY THE ADOLESCENT HEALTH COUNCIL OF GASTON

## EVENT

**TEEN LIFE CARNIVAL**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29th  
FROM NOON UNTIL 4PM**

**MIDTOWN SQUARE MALL AT THE CORNER OF KINGS & INDEPENDENCE**



**ENTERTAINMENT ■ DJ's ■ EXHIBITS ■ MUSIC  
CELEBRITIES ■ GAMES ■ DEMONSTRATIONS  
ART CONTEST ■ GRAFFITI WALL ■ PRIZES**

**Coordinated by: MECKLENBURG COUNCIL ON ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY**

**SPONSORS:**

Charlotte Mecklenburg Urban League, Charlotte Medical Society, Council for Children, Drug Education Center, Junior League of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County Health Department, Metrolina Optimist, Midtown Square, Planned Parenthood of Greater Charlotte, Queen City Optimist, South Park Lions Club, Telephone Pioneers of America, WCKZ, Kiss-102 FM, WSOC-TV

EVENT

# "Let's Talk"

October 7, 8, & 9  
Blue Ridge Mall

---

Straight  
Talk  
Is  
Great  
Talk



---

Displays and Resources for youth and parents to  
increase communication and awareness.

Henderson County Health Department/Teen PAC

---



## FAX ALERT:

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR *RAISING HEALTHY KIDS* TRAINING

#### GCAPP Launches "Let's Talk" Initiative

G-CAPP NEEDS VOLUNTEER GROUP FACILITATORS WHO ARE WILLING TO TRAIN 100 PARENTS WITHIN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS.

INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCE IN GROUP FACILITATION AND ARE COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT SEXUALITY ISSUES SHOULD APPLY FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE G-CAPP TRAINING

Research, focus groups and numerous trips around the state have underlined one startling, and disappointing, fact: almost no one is talking to teens about sex and their individual sexuality. GCAPP has heard a resounding cry from parents in every corner of Georgia: help me talk to my children.

Parents find themselves either uncomfortable, lacking in verbal expertise, or unaware of the facts. Most did not have conversations with their own families and are continuing the same pattern of either not talking at all, or talking too late. With the onset of puberty starting earlier, added to a confusing array of outside influences on children, it is imperative that parents have age-appropriate conversations with their children.

To promote parent-children communications about sexuality, G-CAPP will distribute "*Raising Healthy Kids*," a video by award-winning producer Jeanne Blake.

This video consists of two components: parents with children aged 0 – 7 and parents with children aged 7 – 17. Our goal: to share this valuable information with 20,000 parents in the next year.

- GCAPP WILL PROVIDE one day training for volunteers and curriculum materials, including the *Raising Healthy Kids* video.

#### Training Dates and Locations:

- Tuesday, October 21, 1:00 PM - 5:30 PM - Wednesday, October 22, 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Crowne Plaza, Macon, GA

or

- Wednesday, November 12, 8:30AM - 5:00PM - Omni Hotel, Atlanta, GA

For training workshop registration materials, please call the G-CAPP office at (404) 524-2277.  
For further information please contact Bridget Susi at (404) 524-2277.

# Breaking the Cycle's *Adult Advisors Academy*

**EVENT***When a child asks you.....*

What does sex feel like?

*Do you...*

- A: Change the subject quickly  
 B: Wash his mouth out with soap  
 C: Answer openly and honestly

*Do you need help communicating with Children on issues of Sexuality?*

Capitol Community Technical College  
 61 Woodland Street  
 Hartford, CT

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Keynote**

Patricia Wilson-Coker, J.D., M.S.W.  
 CT Department of Social Services

**Workshops.**

Spirituality and Sexuality: connecting the two

Rev. Martha Klein Larsen

Social, Cultural and Family Values: their effects on adolescents sexuality

Amos Smith, M.S.W, LISW

Building Relationships with Parent and Child

Dr. Ramón Rojano, M.D.

How to Become an "Askable" Adult

Enid Matos Toro

Registration Fee: \$20.00

For more information please call Jack Cullin at **236-9357**-----  
Adult Advisors Academy Workshop registration

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Which workshops will you attend \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form and  
check payable to:

Hartford Action Plan on Infant Health, Inc. • 30 Arbor Street • Hartford, CT 06106 •  
 Ph. 860-236-9357 • Fax 860-232-8321

## EVENT

**HEY!****HEY!****HEY!**

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT:

**SEXUALITY, DRUGS,  
TALKING WITH YOUR  
PARENTS?**

ARE YOU  
KIDDING?THEY'D  
KILL ME!**SOUND CRAZY? NO!!!**

Listen For CALL-IN TALK SHOWS!

**WRMT 1490 AM**October 18, 4:00-5:00  
and**WEED 1390 AM**

October 25, 4:00

ALSO TUNE IN TO CABLE CHANNEL 13

**"TWIN COUNTY LIVE"**

October 23, 7:00

Sponsored by

**NASH COUNTY LET'S TALK COMMITTEE**

For More Information Call

**459-9819**



## EVENT

Ms. Patty Wellborn  
 Central Carolina Bank  
 PO BOX 2506  
 Burlington, NC 27216

Dear Ms. Wellborn:

I would like to thank you for agreeing to host our first "Lunch and Learn" program during Let's Talk Month. I am very happy that we have the opportunity to share information that I believe will be beneficial to parents. And because this is a collaborative effort, your employees have the benefit of receiving information from several community agencies.

As per our phone conversation last week, the following programs and speakers will be provided on the following dates:

Tuesday, October 5, 8:00-8:45am: "AIDS Prevention and Education" by John Bryant, Alamance Cares

Tuesday, October 12, 8:00-8:45am: "Talking With Your Children About Sexuality" by Dawn Wilson, Alamance Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy

Tuesday, October 19, 8:00-8:45am: "Fighting Fair with Families" by Linda Dunn, Alamance County Dispute Settlement Center

Wednesday, October 27, 8:00-8:45am: "What Makes a Healthy Family" by Lee Hall Worthington and Carmen Mayer, Saxapahaw Counseling Services

I understand that the speakers can expect to have about 55 employees present and that all four programs will take place at the 2405 South Church Street branch. The speakers may be contacting you individually for information that may help them better prepare their programs.

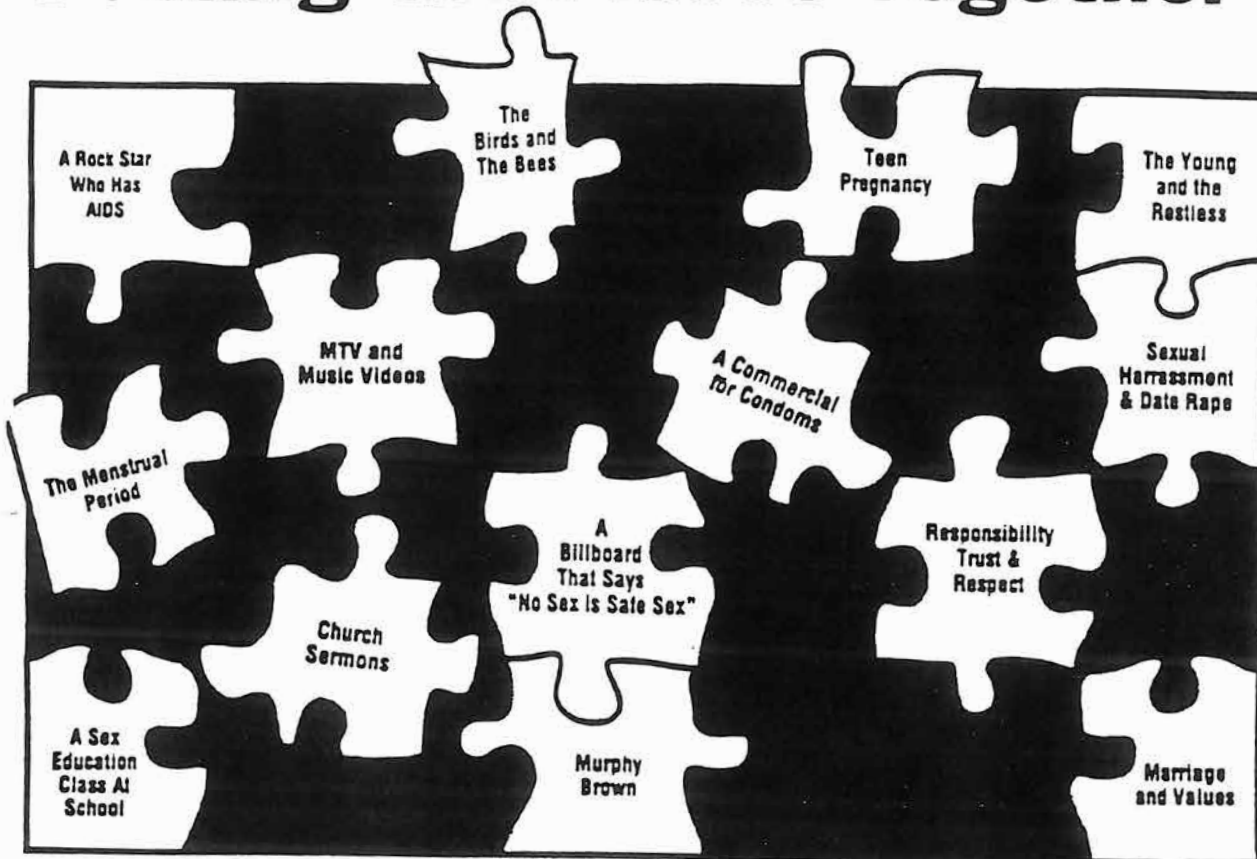
If you have any questions or need to make changes to this schedule, please feel free to call me at 227-2622. I look forward to our partnership in helping parents become more effective and



(919) 227-2622 • 142 S. Lexington Avenue • PO Box 823 • Burlington, North Carolina 27216-08

**EVENT**

# **TEACHABLE MOMENTS: Putting the Pieces Together**



## **Parents: It's Time To Talk OCTOBER 1992**

### **"Kids Need to Know" Workshop**

West End United Methodist Church

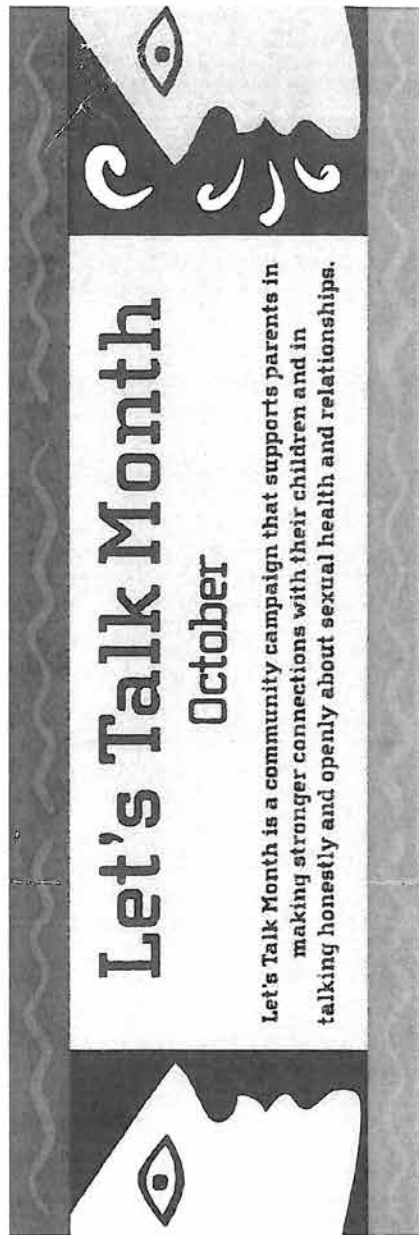
Saturday, October 17, 1992

9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Sponsored by

Nashville Adolescent Pregnancy and Prevention Council

To Register call 741-5653



# Let's Talk Month

## October

Let's Talk Month is a community campaign that supports parents in making stronger connections with their children and in talking honestly and openly about sexual health and relationships.

### How do I TALK to my kids about the BIRDS and the BEES?

#### Robie H. Harris to the rescue!



Parents of children from toddlers to teens are invited to this **FREE** event.

Award-winning children's book author

Robie H. Harris presents her family library on sexual health including *It's NOT the Stork!*, *It's So Amazing!* and *It's Perfectly Normal*. These books can help parents talk with their children, no matter what their age, about birth, babies, bodies, families and healthy sexuality.

Q&A and book signing with the author

**20% off Robie's books at the event**  
courtesy of Wild Rumpus Bookstore

**October 4th, 2007**

**7:00 - 8:30 p.m.**

Doors open at 6:30

**Hennepin County  
Ridgedale Library**

12601 Ridgedale Drive, Minnetonka  
(right behind Ridgedale Mall) - 1st floor

**No RSVP required**

For more info go to [www.moappp.org](http://www.moappp.org)

**Questions?**

Contact [Jocelyn@moappp.org](mailto:Jocelyn@moappp.org) or

651-644-1447 x19

**Co-sponsored by:** Hennepin County Library, Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Department, Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting (MOAPPP) and Planned Parenthood Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota



**Planned Parenthood®**  
Serving Minnesota • North Dakota • South Dakota



**EVENT**

Hennepin



## EVENT

# Registration is OPEN!

## Raising the Bar:

Putting the Promise to Practice in Adolescent  
Reproductive Health and Support for Young Families

A conference for clinicians, youth development professionals, health educators, and advocates  
Presented by the Colorado Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Parenting and Prevention

## October is Let's Talk Month!

COAPPP & The National Campaign to Prevent Teen &  
Unplanned Pregnancy

Present:

### **Doing the Impossible: Encouraging Parents to Talk to Their Teens about Sex, Love, and Relationships**

As part of COAPPP's annual conference, this full day workshop will explore the different ways in which communities can encourage parents and guardians to speak with their children about sex and sexuality and demonstrate how some structured programs are designed to strengthen parent/child communication skills.

Oct 7th, 2009

Cost: \$50

To learn more about all of our conference events

Visit [www.raisethebarcolorado.org](http://www.raisethebarcolorado.org)

Registration ends Sept. 30th!

*Thank you to this year's sponsors for making this event possible!*



## Hartford Public Library Guide On:

## PARENTS & TEENS: **EVENT** talking about sex

In support of the Breaking the Cycle campaign, the Hartford Public Library has created a list of materials available at the Library to help parents and their teenage children communicate about sexuality issues. When you come to the Library either ask for these specific items or search for similar topics in either Spanish or English using such headings as: parenting, sex instruction, puberty, safe sex, sexual ethics, etc. All of the items listed below are at the Central Library. If using one of our nine branches or bookmobile is more convenient for you, ask a librarian to have the book or video sent to your branch or bookmobile for you. Remember, you can always ask a librarian for help.

### *Books to help parents and teens talk about sex*

TITLE	CALL NUMBER	LOCATION
STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART: how to talk to your teenagers about love and sex	HQ 57 .C37	GENERAL READING
LEARNING ABOUT SEX: a guide for children and their parents	HQ57 .A35 j	CHILDREN'S
AIDS-PROOFING YOUR KIDS: a step-by-step guide	HQ 57 .A28	GENERAL READING
WHERE DO BABIES COME FROM?	HQ 53 .R69 1996	CHILDREN'S
GROWING AND CHANGING	HQ 53 .M44 j oversize	CHILDREN'S
HOW TO TALK SO KIDS WILL LISTEN & LISTEN SO KIDS WILL TALK	HQ 755.8 .F3	GENERAL READING
A PARENT'S GUIDE TO TEENAGE SEXUALITY	HQ 57 .G35	GENERAL READING
HOW TO HELP YOUR TEENAGER POSTPONE SEXUAL INVOLVEMENT	HQ 32 .H69	GENERAL READING
LOVE AND SEX AND GROWING	HQ 53 .J6 1990 j	CHILDREN'S
SEX IS NOT A FOUR LETTER WORD: talking sex with your children made easier	HQ 57 .M55	GENERAL READING

## EVENT

## COMMUNITY COUNSELING SERVICES

726 SOUTH GARNETT STREET  
HENDERSON, NORTH CAROLINA 27536

(919) 438-2994

MARY EDITH WATKINS, MA, NCC  
NATIONAL CERTIFIED COUNSELOR  
NORTH CAROLINA REGISTERED  
PRACTICING COUNSELOR



OCTOBER IS

"LET'S TALK" MONTH

## ADOLESCENT SEXUALITY: A SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE

The family and the church have always been and remain the source of community values in a society. Through open communication, family members learn to share their joys and sorrows, their successes and failures, thereby building honesty, trust, self-respect and love among each other.

This workshop - Adolescent Sexuality: A Spiritual Perspective - will offer to ministers, youth directors, Sunday School teachers, or church officers:

1. a description of the multiple aspects of sexuality
2. how sexuality interrelates with church, family, and "growing up"
3. the integration of values, such as self-discipline, trust, responsibility, honesty, openness, consistency, integrity, love
4. an opportunity to discuss the role of the church in the education of families, parents, and children in sexuality, pregnancy prevention, and other related issues
5. a brief history of "Let's Talk" Month
6. a list of professional resources and "Let's Talk" Month activities and opportunities

Please call 438-2994 to make advance reservations for this workshop. Your church's involvement will be an integral part of our community's effort to impact the high teenage pregnancy rate in Vance County.

PLACE: Community Counseling Services  
726 S. Garnett St.  
Henderson, NC 27536

TIME: 9:00 am until 12 noon

COST: FREE

SPONSORED BY: Mary Edith Watkins, MA, NCC  
National Certified Counselor









## MISSION

Established in 1980 as the Center for Population Options, Advocates for Youth champions efforts to help young people make informed and responsible decisions about their reproductive and sexual health. Advocates believes it can best serve the field by boldly advocating for a more positive and realistic approach to adolescent sexual health.

## OUR VISION: THE 3RS

Advocates for Youth envisions a society that views sexuality as normal and healthy and treats young people as a valuable resource.

The core values of Rights. Respect. Responsibility.® (3Rs) animate this vision:

**RIGHTS:** Youth have the right to accurate and complete sexual health information, confidential reproductive and sexual health services, and a secure stake in the future.

**RESPECT:** Youth deserve respect. Valuing young people means involving them in the design, implementation and evaluation of programs and policies that affect their health and well-being.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Society has the responsibility to provide young people with the tools they need to safeguard their sexual health, and young people have the responsibility to protect themselves from too-early childbearing and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.