

2011 ANNUAL REPORT



A sexually healthy Iowa for today and always.



eyes
open
iowa
Your Connection
To Adolescent
Sexual Health

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Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends,

At EyesOpenIowa, we view sexuality as a natural part of being human. Adolescent sexual development, while a nail-biting experience for teens and adults alike, is a normal – and necessary – part of growing up. As we envision the kinds of supports and services teens need to ensure their healthy sexual development, we recognize that adolescent sexual health means more than the absence of negative outcomes. Our holistic view acknowledges that sexual health includes physical, emotional, mental, and social well-being in relation to sexuality and is not merely the absence of disease or dysfunction.

Employing this holistic view, we recognize that sexual health outcomes are affected by more than individual decision making. In fact, a multiplicity of factors impact upon healthy sexual development in childhood and adolescence. Access to age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education and safe affordable quality healthcare are two factors. Family support is another. However, research shows that teens' sexual behaviors and outcomes are greatly influenced by structural factors including poverty and discrimination, gender inequities and gender role expectations, and the assumption that everyone is or should be heterosexual. Consider these statistics as you think about the sexual health of teens in your Iowa community.*

- An estimated 109,384 (16%) of Iowa children ages 0-17 live below the poverty level.
- The high school graduation rate is 87%.
- Statewide, only 37% of students believe they live in a supportive neighborhood where neighbors get along, recognize achievements by teens, help teens in need, or spend time talking with teens.
- Overall, 34% of Iowa high school students in 9th through 12th grades are currently sexually active (i.e. have had sexual intercourse with at least one person during the previous 90 days).
- Among sexually active teens, 34% did not use a condom at last sexual intercourse and 71% did not use either birth control pills or Depo-Provera.
- Eighteen percent of sexually active teens report alcohol or drug use before last sexual intercourse.
- Among Iowa's lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth, 88% report being verbally harassed, 80% report having lies or rumors spread about them, and 23% report being physically assaulted in the last year.

Effective efforts to promote adolescent sexual health must integrate meaningful responses to structural factors along with more traditional concerns. In our annual report, we highlight our efforts over the past year to encourage both conventional and innovative strategies that promote and support adolescent sexual health in Iowa.

With warmest regards,

Rhonda Chittenden
Executive Director

*Source information available by contacting EyesOpenIowa.

Strengthening Evidence-based Prevention Efforts Across the State

As the long-time home to Iowa's statewide teen pregnancy prevention network, EyesOpenIowa provides leadership on the issue as well as grants management of the statewide Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (CAPP) Grant Program on behalf of the Iowa Department of Human Services. In this role, we offer multiple opportunities to the 23 CAPP-funded community-based coalitions and other stakeholders to enhance their science-based and evidence-based prevention services to teens and families.

In 2010-11, we offered the following services.

- Our 8th annual conference on adolescent sexual health attended by 100 educators and stakeholders
- Dissemination of materials including educational brochures for teens, communications tools for parents, and evidence-based curricula for educators
- Lending library with sex education curricula, DVDs, instructional charts and posters, and more
- Tailored on-site consultation to respond to the staff development needs of grantees and the service needs of teens and families

- Two all-grantee meetings dedicated to grantee professional development
- An introductory grant writing workshop
- A forum on the factors of effective collaboration
- Presentations at local and national allied conferences including Risky Business and Healthy Teen Network
- Newly developed state and county-level fact sheets on adolescent sexual health
- Website and Facebook pages
- Policymaker education at the state and national levels
- A monthly e-newsletter to keep stakeholders connected to one another, our staff, and the issues
- Referrals to our many local, state, and national partners

The centerpiece of the CAPP Grant Program is a requirement for implementation of an evidence-based pregnancy prevention curriculum by each community-based grantee. Each curriculum has been rigorously evaluated to show positive changes in specific sexual health outcomes of participants and is included on at least two of the lists of recommended program available to practitioners in the field of adolescent pregnancy prevention.

www.eyesopeniowa.org

11,000

Number of Adolescents Served Using an Approved Curriculum

831

Number of Pregnant or Parenting Teens Served

1,686

Number of Parents of Teens Served

106

Number of Iowa School Districts Served

56

Number of Iowa Counties Served

36,207

Total Iowa Teens Served by CAPP-Funded Services

CAPP GRANT PROGRAM NUMBERS

FY11 LIST OF APPROVED CURRICULA

Being a Responsible Teen
Cuidaté

Draw the Line/
Respect the Line

Reducing the Risk
Safer Choices

Making a Difference
Making Proud Choices

SiHLE

EyesOpenIowa works closely with community-based grantees to ensure accountability for the effective use of state dollars through compliance with the science-based service requirements. We highlight three grantees who are improving adolescent sexual health through strategies that meet the unique needs of their communities.

STRENGTHENING TEEN PARENT FAMILIES FOR A LIFETIME OF SUCCESS

Teen parent families in Decatur and Wayne counties are strengthened and supported through the services of The Family Place in Leon. Trained educators and family support specialists with the Parents as Teacher program make home visits to support teen parents in learning and applying early childhood learning techniques with their young children. Teen families are also invited to attend a weekly group meeting which includes lessons on self-esteem, appropriate discipline techniques, pretend play with their child, and more. A teen parent support group meets once a month. The Family Place works closely with the local public health department & other local agencies to identify and reach all teen parents. A special effort is made to support and recruit teen dads.

The Family Place also offers GED services for students who have dropped out of school due to a pregnancy. Teens are encouraged to stay in school and supported through tutoring, attendance monitoring, goal setting, groups, and one-on-one support. The Family Place assists parents with family planning, child care, obtaining health insurance and other resources they might need to succeed.

SUPPORTING PARENTS AS THEIR CHILD'S PRIMARY SEXUALITY EDUCATOR

Honest, accurate information about sex – particularly from parents – is the first step toward raising healthy children who make responsible decisions about sex. Although most parents want to provide their children with the information they need, many feel unprepared and uncomfortable when it comes to topics of human sexuality. Parent educators are in a unique position to support parents in their ever-changing role as the primary sexuality educator of their children. While the questions and concerns change as the child ages, the goal remains the same: to raise well-informed young people who make healthy decisions throughout their lives.

It's That Easy! A Guide to Raising Sexually Healthy Children is designed to help parent educators incorporate issues of sex and sexuality into their work with families. In Hamilton, Humboldt and Wright counties the CAPP coordinator provides this curriculum to area families. The Bee Inspired CAPP Advisory Group works with school districts to set up parent groups for this education. Holding it in conjunction with the evidence-based pregnancy prevention curriculum that teens receive in school, the coordinator hopes to empower parents to continue the education at home.

EMPOWERING TEENS AS PREVENTION STAKEHOLDERS

A group of teens in Des Moines have created an impressive teen pregnancy prevention campaign. *Future. The Alternative F Word* was born out of the concern of five teenage girls who looked around their neighborhood and decided to respond to a need.

Programs of Children and Families Urban Ministries, the Whyld Girls and the Backyard Boyz are gender-specific after-school programs funded in part by a CAPP grant. In 2009, five Whyld Girls attended the National Service Learning Leadership Conference in Nashville, TN. During this experience, they identified an important issue taking place in their neighborhood that they wanted to change: teen pregnancy. The Whyld Girls saw peers making risky choices in their relationships with their bodies as well as 13 to 17 year old girls getting pregnant. They began to personally think about what choices they would need to make to have a successful future.

As a response to this concern, the Whyld Girls and Backyard Boyz high school-age program participants launched their own teen pregnancy prevention campaign: *Future. The Alternative F Word*. It's about wanting a successful future, and that starts with making a plan that includes healthy choices for their bodies and minds that effect school success and future dreams.



Creating sustainable change in Iowa schools

All Iowa teens need and deserve to know the facts in order to make responsible sexual decisions. These facts should accurately address, at minimum, abstinence, contraception, and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. The WISE Iowa Project seeks to engage stakeholders in public school districts across Iowa with opportunities to create the policies and practices that ensure every student receives an age-appropriate, medically accurate sex education that complies with our State mandate.

Iowa law mandates that school districts utilize Human Growth and Development curricula that include the teaching of research-based, age-appropriate, and bias-free sex education. Unfortunately, the State mandate was not accompanied by funding to support school compliance or to track their success. Funding through the "Working to Institutionalize Sex Ed (WISE)" initiative enabled EyesOpenIowa to gather the necessary information, partners, tools, and insights to facilitate the institutionalization of effective sex education. Through the resources provided by the WISE Iowa Project, our three partner school districts were able to maximize their readiness to comply with Iowa's Human Growth and Development mandate, revised in 2007, from community mobilization to district policy and curriculum implementation. Our three partner school districts were Perry Community School District, Clear Creek Amana Community School District, and Keokuk Community School District.

OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE INITIAL PHASE OF THE PROJECT ARE:

The completion of two school surveys, one with administrators and one with educators. The survey results now allow us to accurately understand and describe how sex education is prioritized through policy and implemented in classrooms in 20% of Iowa's 361 school districts.

The distribution of evidence-based curricula to all Area Education Agencies across Iowa. The curricula are in compliance with the State mandate and can be borrowed by Iowa schools for review or implementation.

The effective saturation of the population of Iowa school superintendents and principals with materials on the project and the revised Human Growth and Development mandate via multiple mailings, and presentations and exhibits at professional meetings. As such, about 75 % of Iowa school administrators report being aware of the mandate and 45% need more information in order to improve their school districts' policy.

In its fourth year, the (TxT) Talking Sex Together statewide media campaign is on the cutting edge of using new media technologies to reach audiences with public health strategies. Recognized as one of a handful of campaigns nationally that is geared towards enhancing teen pregnancy prevention efforts, the (TxT) Talking Sex Together campaign continues to evolve and engage more teens.

The (TxT) Talking Sex Together campaign is an innovative social media strategy for Iowa teens designed to enhance the teen pregnancy prevention efforts of communities, schools, and families. On the third Friday of the month from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., teens texted their anonymous questions to a trained sex educator, TxTina. TxTina skillfully responded to their questions in 144 characters or less. The questions to the right are examples of real questions submitted by Iowa teens accompanied by the skillful answers of TxTina. **To learn more about the campaign, go to teenstxt.com.**

OVER
1,134
Subscribers to the Mobile Campaign

567
Questions were Submitted to the Mobile Hotline

84,238
Visitors to teenstxt.com

Texting the Facts to Iowa Teens

My boyfriend wants to have sex, but I don't know if I'm quite ready yet. What should I do?

Talk with your boyfriend and let him know you're not ready. Communication is the key to a good relationship. Talk with a trusted adult. If you do decide, use condoms/birth control.

How do you know you're ready to have sex?

When you've talked with your partner, you're in a committed relationship, you're on a birth control method that you can use correctly, have been tested for STIs, and decided that you're ready!

Can you still get pregnant if you are on birth control?

Nothing is 100% effective except abstinence, but most birth control is very effective at preventing pregnancy. Condoms need to be used to prevent STI transmission.

How can you stay away from having sex?

Don't use drugs or alcohol, avoid situations where the pressures of sex might be, suggest alternatives, use delay tactics, and practice saying no.

What are some signs of pregnancy?

The biggest sign is a missed period. Other signs might be breast tenderness or upset stomach. If you are concerned, you should get a pregnancy test.

How is a condom used properly?

Check expiration date, store in cool/dry place, use water-based lube like KY, pinch tip, roll down, make sure it doesn't slip from the base of the penis, hold the base before pulling out, and read all the directions on the package! If you have questions, talk to a health provider for complete directions.

Do teens get pregnant easily nowadays?

Nope! But teens today have more ways of preventing pregnancy than their parents or grandparents did.

What if a young teenage boy that's not fat has big nipples?

Nothing to fear! Normal! Boys and girls have nipples big and small!

OUR FOUR COMMITMENTS TO EXCELLENCE

We invite all providers of sexual health education in Iowa to voluntarily commit to them as well.

AFFIRMATION

Providers will affirm sexuality as a natural lifelong quality of being human that can be expressed in healthy, responsible ways.

ACCURACY

Providers will deliver sexual health education that is factual, medically accurate, and informed by the weight of peer-reviewed research.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Providers will voluntarily adhere to a basic set of science-based standards and be willing to accept a periodic peer review of practices and program content.

ADVOCACY

Providers will actively advocate for . . .

- Abstinence first from any form of risky sexual activity;
- Age-appropriate, medically accurate sexuality education for all;
- Access and referral to reproductive health care and services for sexually active youth; and,
- The efficacy of contraception and condoms in reducing the risk of pregnancy and STI/HIV infection.

OUR MISSION

To support Iowa communities in ensuring the sexual health of all adolescents through advocacy, education, and collaboration.



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