I. Introduction

- Despite significant declines in the teen birth rate since the early 1990s, the current teen birth rate in Hartford is disproportionately higher than the U.S. and Connecticut.

- Teenage pregnancies and births are associated with higher rates of low birth weight, infant mortality, and Chlamydia and gonorrhea infections.

- In addition to the human costs, teen pregnancy also has a significant financial impact with $10.9 billion in the U.S. and at least $137 million in Connecticut spent in 2008 in public costs related to teen pregnancy. In Hartford, that number is nearly $17 million.

Health Equity Index

- The City of Hartford Health and Human Services has referenced the Health Equity Index, a community-based assessment tool that can be used to identify social, political, economic, and environmental conditions that are most strongly correlated with specific health outcomes. HHS has utilized this tool to demonstrate that teen pregnancy is not a public health concern that stands alone, but one that is impacted by many other community conditions.

II. Health Equity Index and Teen Pregnancy

- Across neighborhoods in Hartford, high poverty rates, low employment, overcrowded housing, and substandard living conditions are related to high teen birth rates.

- Data triangulation techniques were used to inform decisions on program implementation, geographical distribution, and target populations. Data monitoring and evaluation processes continue to inform our future strategic planning and implementation for sustainable efforts.

- The highest teen birth rates exist in neighborhoods where socioeconomic conditions and health outcomes are the least favorable.

- The relatively high teen birth rate coupled with health, economic, and social disparities drive the need to address precursors to teen pregnancy in the context of social determinants of health.

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III. Integrating Social Determinants Of Health in to Teen Pregnancy Prevention Strategies

- Through an RFP process nearly 26 different partners were selected to implement Evidence Based Interventions, Clinical Best Practices, and Community Mobilization Strategies. Partners were selected based upon their ability to serve teens and adults living in neighborhoods most negatively impacted by teen pregnancy, poverty, low educational attainment and economic stability. Strategies being implemented include program adaptation, assessment of facilitator skills, and knowledge related to the provision of culturally competent programs.

- Interventions that address socioeconomic influences at multiple levels could positively affect large numbers of teens and help eliminate disparities in teen childbearing. While all selected sites are playing a key role in reaching out to populations in at-risk situations, non-traditional sites such as workforce development sites will:

  1. Provide the opportunity for long-term vision and sustainable results, and
  2. Provide access to a greater number of youth and those who serve their needs. Such non-traditional sites are more capable of addressing the needs not commonly associated with teen pregnancy.

Capital Workforce Partners (CWP), the state’s regional Workforce Investment Board (WIB), coordinates programs and initiatives to develop a skilled, educated and vital workforce that promotes and invests in youth and future workforce development solutions.

- In 2011, CWP youth enrolled in summer youth employment programs completed a Youth Risk Behavior Survey for the Hartford Teen Pregnancy Initiative.

- Two CWP funded agencies, serving 123 youth.

- Over the last 7 months, we continued to engage CWP in conversations which has resulted in the development of a crosswalk between the EBI’s from the Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health approved list of EBI’s and with CWP’s Career Competencies.

- Will serve 270 youth in 3 different locations in summer 2013.

IV. Discussion

Hartford teens are faced with multiple determinants impacting their daily lives. Many teens are affected with supplementing household incomes while still working toward attaining their high school diplomas.

By creating conditions for youth to achieve economic security while educating them to make informed decisions about their reproductive sexual health, we will have a greater impact on reducing teen pregnancy, STI and HIV rates in the Hartford community.


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