

Program Highlights

South Dakota

Involving Parents in Preventing HIV Infection among Youth

The South Dakota Department of Education works to increase parent-child communication about sexual behavior by hosting educational dinner events for parents. Each dinner event is led by a trained facilitator and includes parent discussions regarding teen sexual behavior, input from teens on discussion topics, and presentations on topics related to teen culture and sexual behavior. From 2006–2007, dinner events took place in seven South Dakota communities and were recognized as a valuable strategy for increasing parent involvement in HIV prevention. Immediately following the events, the majority of parents agreed that the event helped ease their fears or concerns about having “the talk” with their teen (93%), that the content of the session was relevant to their current situation (96%), and that the event helped them feel more confident about having “the talk” with their teen(s) (93%). Of the parent attendees that participated in a follow-up questionnaire: 59% employed a new approach to the conversation of sexuality and 74% reported having had a conversation about sex with their teen since the event.

To complement the dinner events, a private organization provided funding for television and billboard ads to market the accompanying, Don't Tell My Parents.org Web site. A phone survey conducted to determine the campaign's recognition rate found that 80% of those surveyed were familiar with the campaign.