

Public Health Practice Stories from the Field



77
babies are born for every 1,000 females aged 15–19 years on the south side of San Antonio, Texas—more than twice the national average

25%
of South San Antonio teen mothers will have another child as a teenager

32
first-time pregnant and parenting teen mothers entered an evidence-based program that improves both mother and infant outcomes

300
probation staff received training to help reduce teen pregnancy among South San Antonio probationers

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Preventing Repeat Teen Pregnancy:

A Multitiered Approach to Teen Pregnancy Prevention in San Antonio

Although teen births in the United States have declined, the teen birth rate on the south side of San Antonio, Texas, remains more than twice the national rate at 77.3 births per 1,000 females aged 15–19 years. Additionally, in 2010 (the most recent year for which CDC data is available), 22% of teen births in Texas were repeat births—the second highest percentage in the country. In South San Antonio, 25% of females aged 15–19 who already have given birth will have another child as a teenager. Teen pregnancy and childbirth in Bexar County—which includes San Antonio—cost taxpayers \$63.9 million a year for health care, foster care, lost tax revenue, and increased incarceration rates among children of teen parents.

Teen parents are likely to achieve fewer years of formal schooling. Children of teen mothers are more likely to experience early developmental problems and to become teen parents themselves. The sons of teen mothers are more likely to be incarcerated.

To decrease teen pregnancy on the south side of San Antonio, the University of Texas Health Science Center, UT Teen Health (UTTH) program entered into a cooperative agreement with CDC and the US Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Adolescent Health as part of the President's Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative. One of the program's goals is to decrease the repeat teen birth rate by 10% by September 2015. To achieve this goal, UTTH is partnering with Nurse Family Partnership, a community health program that focuses on prenatal care and parenting with first-time mothers through evidence-based programs. In addition, UTTH is partnering with hospital systems, social service agencies, high schools, and college campuses to provide a multitiered approach to teen pregnancy prevention.



What We Did

To decrease the repeat teen pregnancy rate, the University of Texas Health Science Center, UT Teen Health program

- Collaborates with Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) to
 - provide “best practice” updates on contraceptives such as promoting LARC usage,
 - establish teen-friendly environments by providing same-day appointments,
 - build networks to provide condoms to clients who need them, and
 - promote peer-to-peer reproductive health seminars that discuss resistance skills and goal setting.
- Works with a hospital nurse liaison to increase teens’ postpartum access to health-care services; the nurse liaison educates patients in the postpartum unit about contraceptive options and connects these teens to clinics. The nurse also follows these patients with two- and six-week follow-up phone calls to answer questions, assess their usage of the chosen birth control method, and help them navigate the health-care system.
- Partners with area schools and the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department to offer evidence-based programs to prevent teen pregnancy.
- Collaborates with the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program to refer WIC clients to family planning clinics to gain access to preventive care.

What We Accomplished

The UT Teen Health program saw several achievements:

- UTTH received school board approval of evidence-based curricula in area schools that serve pregnant and parenting teens.
- Of 48 pregnant and parenting teens who started the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) program in 2012, 32 entered NFP through UTTH’s collaboration with schools.
- All NFP clients received contraceptive education at each NFP home visit.
- The nurse liaison saw 155 postpartum patients while working with UTTH over seven months. Of these, 96 patients (62%) received either an IUD, implant, or injection as a method of contraception. The nurse liaison distributed 600 copies of teen-friendly STD prevention and contraceptive method materials to postpartum teens and family members, as well as at local outreach events.
- UTTH educated over 300 probation department staff members in anatomy, adolescent reproductive development, STDs, contraceptives, and how to access clinical services for youth in custody. Thirty probation and detention workers were trained in and are now using Reducing the Risk®, an evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention program. The probation department now refers probationers to clinics and can transport youth to appointments.
- UTTH helped WIC staff develop two enrollment application questions designed to increase referrals for reproductive health care.

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