

PROJECT EMPOWER

Education Means Power

*Buncombe County's
Teen Pregnancy
Prevention Initiative*



Special Thanks and Appreciation to:

Parents of Project Empower participants

Dr. Pamela Baldwin, Superintendent,
Asheville City Schools

Mrs. Cynthia Selling, Principal,
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Buncombe County's Community
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QUESTIONS?

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Honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"In your life's blueprint should be a deep belief in your own dignity, your worth, and your own somebodiness." #MLK

What Is Your Blueprint?

Over the past 11 ½ years, Project EMPOWER has provided advocacy and support services to youth and teens, enhancing the fact that they are "somebody," worthy of making proud and responsible choices. Overall Goal: to instill self-esteem, a sense of their purpose and to reduce teen pregnancy and the school drop-out rate.

These services have been provided with immense support from community partnerships: area agencies, school systems and faith-based partnerships. Over the past three years, Project EMPOWER has implemented the "Making Proud Choices" curriculum to males and females, ages 11-15, who attend school in the Asheville City Schools District.

There is no one-size-fits-all advice for dealing with the challenges youth and teens face on a daily basis: peer pressure, depression, poverty, not fitting in, bullying, drugs, sex, family issues, etc. We are finding ourselves in a "whole new ball game" as we deal with the complexities affecting today's youth and teens in a fast-paced, media-driven culture. Times have changed and so must our methods in dealing with teen-age pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS.

**"No person has the right
to rain on your dreams."
~ Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Over the past 11 ½ years, Project EMPOWER participants have been encouraged to reach their personal and academic goals, to be proud of themselves and their community, and to consider how taking risks today could prevent them from attaining their future goals and dreams of a higher education.

The Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (TPPI) invests in the young people of North Carolina. We help teens acquire the knowledge and skills they need today so they will be able to take care of themselves, their families, and their communities for the rest of their lives.



**The World is YOURS!
We Want You to SUCCEED!**

The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program (APPP) prevents teen pregnancy by providing young people with essential education, supporting academic achievement, encouraging parent/teen communication, promoting responsible citizenship, and building self confidence among their participants. Project EMPOWER is one of NC's Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiatives. *Source: NC DHHS Women's Health Branch*

North Carolina's teen pregnancy rate fell 11% last year, hitting a record low for the 6th consecutive year, according to new data provided by the North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics released by the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of North Carolina (APCNC). Statewide, 11,178 girls ages 15-19 experienced a pregnancy in 2013.

Other highlights from the newly released data include:

- Reduced pregnancies among girls of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, helping to minimize some historical disparities. Pregnancies to white, black, and Hispanic teens dropped 13%, 11% and 7%, respectively.
- Reducing the teen pregnancy rate also reduced all potential outcomes of teen pregnancy. The teen birth rate dropped

*Belinda K. Grant,
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of Mount Zion
Community
Development, Inc.
Photo: Urban News*



A Message from Caryn B. Monroe



*Caryn B.
Monroe*

Sharing the Facts of Life

Initiating a conversation about the facts of life or sex may be difficult for some parents because they may not have grown up in an environment

where the subject was discussed. Some may even feel inadequate, feeling that they do not know the right answers, or maybe confused as to what information should and should not be offered. But there is help.

Buncombe County DHHS works with parents as well as community partners to enhance educational awareness about teen sexual health and prevention initiatives. For more information, contact the Buncombe County Health & Human Services at (828) 250-5000, and visit the website at www.buncombecounty.org.

by 11%, and the teen abortion rate dropped by 13%.

- 75% of counties saw teen pregnancy decrease in 2013.
- Less than one-quarter (24.3%) of pregnancies happened to a girl who had been pregnant before, the lowest proportion of repeat pregnancies in state history.
- North Carolina's teen pregnancy rate is 67% lower than when it peaked in 1990 at a rate of 105.4 per 1,000 girls ages 15-19.

Source: Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of NC

Overview of Teen Pregnancy & Childbearing



Parenting at any age can be challenging, but it can be particularly difficult for adolescent parents. In 2013, almost 275,000 babies were born to teen girls between the ages of 15 and 19. Childbearing during adolescence negatively affects the parents, their children, and society.

Compared with their peers who delay childbearing, teen girls who have babies are:

- Less likely to finish high school
- More likely to rely on public assistance
- More likely to be poor as adults
- More likely to have children who have poorer educational, behavioral, and health outcomes over the course

of their lives than children born to older parents

Teen childbearing costs U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars due to lost tax revenue, increased public assistance payments, and greater expenditures for public health care, foster care, and criminal justice services.

Source: US DHHS, Office of Adolescent Health

Organizations that Support Adolescent Sexual Health in Buncombe County

- Asheville City Schools Foundation
- Child Abuse Prevention Services
- HealthPartners/Buncombe Healthy Carolinians: 828-250-5205
- Our Voice
- Planned Parenthood Health Systems, Inc.
- YWCA of Asheville (NC TPPI Adolescent Parenting Program)
- Mt. Zion Community Development, Inc. (NC TPPI Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program)