

PROJECT EMPOWER

Education Means Power

*Buncombe County's
Teen Pregnancy
Prevention Initiative*



**A very special thank you
to Project EMPOWER's
Planning Advisory Council:**

Chrysta Burris, Buncombe County
Health & Human Services

Johnnie Grant, *The Urban News*

Keynon Lake, *"My Daddy Taught Me
That"* (Former Member)

Michele Lemell, Asheville City Schools

Peggy Weil, WNC AIDS Project (WNCAP)

Sara Green, Buncombe County
Health & Human Services

Special Thanks and Appreciation to:

Parents of Project Empower participants

Dr. Pamela Baldwin, Superintendent,
Asheville City Schools

Mrs. Cynthia Selling, Principal,
Asheville Middle School

Ms. Joyce Best, Principal,
Asheville High School

Mr. Greg Townsend, Principal, SILSA

Mr. Rocky Cunningham, Coach, AHS

Ms. Sonita Warren-Dixon, Coach, AHS

Buncombe County's Community
Health Advisory Committee,
and our community partnerships.

Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.

Board of Directors

Verita Woods, Chair

Meryl McDonald, Vice-Chair

Vanessa Penix, Secretary

Sophie Dixon, Treasurer

Sarah Wilcher,

Fund-Raising Co-Chair

Questions? Contact Us

Belinda K. Grant, Executive Director
(828) 350-9821 mzcd@cs.com

Shari Smith
Coordinator, MZCD Programs
(828) 225-8155 projectnafo1@cs.com

Caryn B. Monroe
Project EMPOWER Outreach Worker
(828) 225-8157 tpio1@cs.com

Mrs. Rosa B. Hearst, Receptionist
(828) 252-0515

February...

**In addition to Black
History Month & HIV/AIDS
Awareness Day, February is
also Teen Dating Violence
Awareness Month.**

Black history is traditionally set aside to be celebrated in February, but Black history is a part of all of our history, everyday, everywhere, for all time, and cannot be set aside on a shelf to be celebrated in February only!

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Join loveisrespect in promoting respect and healthy relationships by wearing orange this month.

What to do? On February 10, 2015 get as many people as you can to wear something orange. You can wear orange clothes, nail polish, face paint, hair ties, anything you can think of.



Don't just wear it, talk about it! Tell people why you are wearing orange. Let them know that you're wearing orange to promote love, respect and healthy relationships. (#teenDVmonth, #Orange4Love, www.loveisrespect.org)

Adolescent Health Advocacy Day

Mark your calendars for February 11, as young people and youth advocates from across the state rally at the North Carolina General Assembly to talk about these critical adolescent health issues: Access to Care, Student Well-Being & Mental Health, and Teen Pregnancy Prevention.

Make your voice heard! Don't miss this opportunity to stand up for young people's rights and needs. There is no cost to attend AHAD, but please register by February 9. Youth groups are encouraged to attend; you may register up to 20 young people from your group.

Wednesday, February 11, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Legislative Auditorium, State Legislative Building, 116 W. Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601. Program includes The State of Adolescent Health, youth panelists, and legislative speakers. (*Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC*)

What Love is Not!

More than one in 10 teens who have been on a date have also been physically abused by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the last year. Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month is a national effort to raise awareness and protect teens from violence.



**In the US,
one in three
students report
experiencing
some form of
abuse.**

Warning Signs

Being able to tell the difference between healthy, unhealthy and abusive relationships can be more difficult than you would think. No two relationships are the same, so what's unhealthy in one relationships may be abusive in the next.

Although there are many signs to pay attention to in a relationship, look for these common warning signs of dating abuse:

- Checking cell phones, emails, or social networks without permission
- Extreme jealousy or insecurity
- Constant belittling or put-downs
- Explosive temper
- Isolation from family and friends
- Making false accusations
- Erratic mood swings
- Physically inflicting pain or hurt in any way
- Possessiveness
- Telling someone what to do
- Repeatedly pressuring someone to have sex

(*Break the Cycle, Empowering Youth to End Domestic Violence*)

Black HIV/AIDS Awareness

It is estimated that at some point in their lifetimes, one in 16 black men and 1 in 32 black women in the United States will be diagnosed with HIV infection.

In 2010 alone, approximately 16,188 African Americans/Blacks were diagnosed with AIDS in the United States, this number has slowly declined since 2007. However, as of December 31, 2009, an estimated 250,745 African Americans/Blacks with an AIDS diagnosis had died in the United States alone.

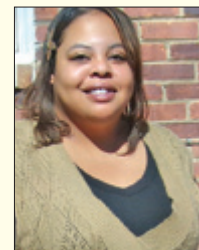
Source: *Centers for Disease Control*

Promoting healthy practices during adolescence, and taking steps to better protect young people from health risks are critical for the prevention of health problems in adulthood, and for countries' future health and social infrastructure. (*World Health Organization, May 2014*)

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



A Message from Caryn B. Monroe



Caryn B. Monroe

Junk Food

While some foods promote health, other foods can be detrimental to health.

Youth and teens should try to limit the amount of "junk" foods (unhealthy foods) they eat.

Foods that are deep-fried in unhealthy oils, covered in salt, infused with sugar, dripping in fat, and hyped with caffeine should be avoided as much as possible.

This includes many popular favorites such as french fries, potato chips and other fried chips and snacks, cookies, snack cakes, candy, fatty red meats such as hamburgers, sodas, and so-called "sports" drinks.

These foods are considered "junk" because they add calories to a diet without much nutritive value.

Helping Youth & Teens to Develop Healthy Eating Habits

Although we know it is important to limit "junk food" this often easier said than done. Unhealthy foods are often the most convenient and frequently less expensive than their



healthier counterparts. In general, the healthiest foods are the ones that are fresh and need to be washed, cut, cooked, and prepared, while some of the unhealthiest foods come in convenient, ready-to-eat bags, boxes, bottles, or pouches.

At a time when families seem to be busier than ever, these convenience foods are hard to resist. Fortunately, not all "convenience foods" are unhealthy. Today's groceries stores now carry pre-washed, pre-cut, vegetables, and pre-peeled, cored, and sliced fresh fruits, individually-sized bags of nuts, and even an array of some frozen, but healthy meals and snacks. (*Mentalhealth.net*)