
24 April 2014

Dear Friends,

Every year 7.3 million girls under the age of 18 give birth to a child. The number of pregnancies is even higher.

Often, these are girls who are poor, illiterate or have little education, and live in rural or remote areas.

Most programs often fail to get at the roots causes of pregnancy among adolescent girls because they see girls as the problem. This misses the point. Poverty, gender inequality, lack of access to services, harmful social and cultural norms, lack of power, are at the core of the challenges.

The resources shared below provide insights on these issues and share programs that can help to stem the tide of pregnancy among adolescent girls.

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Resource) UNFPA Motherhood in Childhood - Fact Sheet & Full Report

(Resource) Promising Practices for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

(Toolkit) Your Life Your Dream Toolkit: A book that helps young people make informed decisions about their sexual lives

(Call for Pre-Applicaiton Notices) Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls: intervention development, delivery, operations research and impact evaluation

(Call for Applications) Alexia Women's Initiative Grant: Documentary on Women's Issues

(Resource) UNFPA Motherhood in Childhood: Facing the challenge of adolescent pregnancy

Source: UNFPA - The United Nations Population Fund (<http://bit.ly/1hQ6pcd>)

FACT SHEET

10 facts about adolescent pregnancy:

- Every day, **20,000 girls below age 18** give birth in developing countries.
- Of the **7.3 million** girls below age 18 who gave birth each year in developing

countries, **2 million** of them are under age 15.

- **95 percent** of adolescent births occur in developing countries.
- In developed countries, there are **680,000** births to adolescent mothers annually. Nearly half of these occur in the United States.
- Adolescents make up about **18 percent** of the world's population. **88 percent** of them live in developing countries.
- The lifetime opportunity cost related to adolescent pregnancy -- measured by the mother's foregone annual income over her lifetime -- ranges from **1 percent of annual GDP, or \$124 billion**, in China to **30 percent of annual GDP, or \$15 billion**, in Uganda.
- Adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 19 account for as many as **3.2 million** unsafe abortions annually in developing countries.
- An estimated **70,000** adolescents in developing countries die each year from complications during pregnancy and childbirth.
- Girls who become pregnant before age 15 in low- and middle-income countries have double the risk for **maternal death and obstetric fistula** than older women, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
- **Education** continues to be the **single most important predictor** of age at marriage over time. Child marriage is strongly associated with early pregnancy. An estimated 39,000 girls are married every day.

For a copy of the UNFPA fact sheet visit: <http://bit.ly/1h7gHyx>

FULL REPORT

"Every day in developing countries, 20,000 girls below age 18 give birth. Nine in 10 of these births occur within marriage or a union. This has consequences on the health, education, employment and rights of an untold millions of girls. What are the challenges of adolescent pregnancy, and what can we do to ensure girls have a healthy and safe transition into adulthood?"

The UNFPA Motherhood in Childhood full report is 132 pages, and it is available in English, French, Spanish, Russian, and Arabic.

For a link to download the full report visit: <http://bit.ly/1gMa8Wo>

(Resource) Promising Practices for Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

Source: *Advocates for Youth* (<http://bit.ly/1nsBUlw>)

Teen pregnancy and early childbearing are complex issues which have attracted a great deal of attention from service providers, educators, and policy makers in recent years.¹ Experience and research clearly indicate that adolescent pregnancy is associated with a variety of factors—it is not simply a problem of teens having unprotected sexual intercourse at an early age. For many young people, the issues related to early pregnancy and childbearing include much broader social, economic, cultural, and psychological factors, including poverty, school failure, and sexual abuse. A further complicating factor is that adult men are frequently the fathers of children born to teenage women.

These complexities pose particular challenges to pregnancy prevention program planners. It must be recognized that there is no "magic solution" to teen pregnancy nor will a single intervention work for all teens. Communities should not look for immediately lower pregnancy or birth rates over a short period because the process is time-consuming, requires affirmation from young people, and a serious commitment of financial resources. To reach a broad teen audience, programmers need to implement a combination of strategies and involve all key members of the community.

While there is still much to learn about the causes and consequences of early pregnancy, program planners can benefit greatly from the research and the "lessons learned" from the numerous programs already in place across the country. This document summarizes key ingredients of successful teen pregnancy prevention programs and may be used as a guide for developing new strategies and strengthening existing interventions.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The following principles are important for program implementation:

- **Set clearly defined and realistic program goals and objectives.** They may relate to delayed initiation of sexual intercourse, increased and more effective contraceptive use, reduced rates of pregnancy and childbearing among participants, and/or increased rates of school completion.
- **Encourage community collaboration.** Parents, neighborhood organizations, schools, health providers, and youth agencies can provide critical support during all phases of program design and implementation. The media, business sector, religious organizations, and policy makers also play an important role in the prevention partnership.
- **Involve youth in needs assessment, program design, implementation, and evaluation.** Teens can be involved in a variety of activities including agency advisory boards, community outreach efforts, and program planning and review.
- **Create activities that are both age and developmentally appropriate.** Interventions should be tailored for younger, middle, and older adolescents and should account for varying levels of cognitive development.
- **Provide culturally appropriate program activities.** Activities should be relevant to young people and should reflect an understanding of and sensitivity to the racial and

ethnic backgrounds of participants.

- **Coordinate messages to target both young women men.** It is important to emphasize joint responsibility, sexual communication, assertiveness, and refusal skills. Either gender-specific or coed programs can reach both young women and men.
- **Offer long-term and consistent support.** Programs should be tailored to individual participants. While some young people need little support to prevent a pregnancy, others will require more comprehensive interventions over a sustained period of time.
- **Provide information on both abstinence and contraception and ensure access to contraceptive services.** Messages on abstinence and postponement of sexual activity are important for those who have not yet initiated sexual intercourse and should be presented as viable options for those who are already sexually active. Sexually active teens also require accessible and affordable contraceptive and reproductive health services. Still other adolescents may need additional interventions to strengthen their motivation to prevent or delay too-early childbearing.

PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Pregnancy prevention programs must account for the varying levels of risk among teens. When developing specific interventions, the following issues are important to consider:

Sexuality Education

All young people need comprehensive sexuality education to prepare them for healthy adult relationships. Sexuality education programs should increase adolescents' knowledge and help them to explore attitudes, feelings, and values about human development, relationships, dating, gender roles, sexual orientation, sexual behavior, and healthy sexual decision-making. Educational programs are most effective when they

- Provide accurate information on both abstinence and contraception,
- Are developmentally appropriate,
- Encourage skill development, including decision-making, assertiveness and negotiation skills as well as life skills, training and goal setting.

Contraceptive Services

A sensitive, well-trained, and non-judgmental staff person plays an important role by helping teens learn about and decide to use contraception effectively and consistently. The first contact with a family planning service provider is critical in setting the stage for future visits. Family planning staff should utilize a guided counseling process to help a teen decide which method of contraception is most appropriate. This type of counseling is particularly useful for teens who receive a negative pregnancy test during a "pregnancy scare."⁸ In addition, the role of males should be addressed in family planning settings. Although men are influential in contraceptive use and acceptance among young women, they are seldom specifically engaged in prevention efforts.

Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents should include gynecological exams, contraceptive methods, pregnancy testing, and screening, treatment, and/or referral for sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS.

Teen-friendly services are most effective when they

- Guarantee confidentiality,
- Offer accessible hours, including walk-in appointments and flexible and extended hours during evenings and weekends,
- Offer a convenient setting where teens naturally congregate,
- Provide free-of-charge or affordable services (on a sliding fee scale),
- Offer directive contraceptive education and counseling,
- Offer to delay the pelvic exam at the initial visit.

Motivational Opportunities and Related Services

For those teens at highest risk of pregnancy, effective prevention strategies include improving educational and economic opportunities and/or intervening in the numerous social and psychological factors associated with sexual risk-taking. Strategies should be designed for the individual young people and need to include access to

- Psychosocial counseling, including treatment for sexual abuse, drug and alcohol use, and/ or family distress,
- Mentoring programs for youth to develop a close relationship with an adult,
- Educational opportunities, including tutoring and access to higher education,
- Recreational activities such as sports, drama, and social clubs,
- Vocational and job skills, including job placement,
- Community service opportunities.

CALL TO ACTION

Based upon these program strategies and principles, communities may want to assess adolescent needs, review service availability, identify gaps and resources, and develop a comprehensive plan of action for adolescent pregnancy prevention. This plan should address ways to develop new programs, strengthen existing efforts, or better coordinate activities and referral networks so that all teens have access to a wide array of prevention services. To be most effective, community-wide program efforts must be supported by expanded financial resources, increased public awareness, and the implementation of favorable policies at the national, state, and local levels.

Written by: Laura Davis, 1996

Please contact Advocates for Youth's National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Clearinghouse at

202.419.3420 to receive additional information, technical assistance, or training on pregnancy prevention programs or related issues.

(Toolkit) Your Life Your Dream Toolkit: A book that helps young people make informed decisions about their sexual lives

Source: Family Care International (<http://bit.ly/1j7Pf5g>)

You, Your Life, Your Dreams is a book that helps young people make informed decisions about their sexual lives. Easy to read and visually attractive, it provides accessible, objective, and urgently-needed information on a broad range of sexual and reproductive health issues. Designed for young people and for educators who work with them, the manual was originally conceived for use in English-speaking Africa, and is now being distributed in three languages and four different versions reflecting the regional contexts and the unique challenges facing adolescents in Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

You, Your Life, Your Dreams is available for download in the following editions: English-speaking Africa (2000), French (2nd edition, 2010), Spanish (2007), English-speaking Caribbean (2008), Swahili (2009), and Dutch (2009).

For a link to download the toolkit visit: <http://bit.ly/RstSW4>

(Call for Pre-Application Notices) Prevention of Violence Against Women and Girls: intervention development, delivery, operations research and impact evaluation

What Works To Prevent Violence is a global programme administered by a consortium led by the Medical Research Council of South Africa, in partnership with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Social Development Direct, on behalf of DFID. Its aim is to build knowledge on what works to prevent VAWG. This spans knowledge on (i) primary prevention strategies and programmes, (ii) interventions to strengthen women's and girls' resilience to violence, and (iii) specific response mechanisms that seek to prevent VAWG.

We will be making **innovation grants** to support 10-14 national organisations or international NGOs working in DFID priority countries to fund innovative approaches to preventing violence or meeting the needs of victims/survivors. In the process, the grants will strengthen the capacity of researchers to conduct rigorous evaluation research on VAWG interventions. We will also be undertaking **operations research and impact evaluations of promising existing interventions** to assess their effectiveness, or if proven effective, to better understand the economics of **scale up**.

We request expressions of interest to apply for an innovation grant or to apply for

an intervention to be evaluated (either by the MRC's consortium, or in collaboration with the MRC's consortium). Pre-application notices are requested prior to the issuing of a Request for Applications (RFA) in June 2014.

What will be supported?

1. **Innovation grants** will range between £ 300 000 and £ 1 million, but will be made in different categories (small, medium and large). We will make 10-14 grants. Awards will be made in late 2014 for up to three years. The grants may cover the development, implementation and evaluation of the intervention, M & E, and capacity development of staff from the in-country lead organization. About half of the projects supported will be eligible for funding for very rigorous impact evaluation. All interventions must aim to prevent intimate partner or sexual violence against women and girls. We encourage:

- interventions, or combinations of interventions, that have a clear theory of change
- interventions, or combinations of interventions, that have greater potential for scale up if proven effective
- applications from consortia that include implementing organisations and researchers (from outside the MRC consortium)
- applications from organisations with small or medium budgets, and we reserve the right to work with promising organisations to negotiate changes to budgets and scope of work in keeping with needs of the overall programme

2. **Operations Research and Impact Evaluation of existing interventions or combinations of interventions:** we would like to hear of existing interventions that aim to prevent intimate partner or sexual violence against women and girls, either as their primary goal or a secondary goal within a wider programme, and would benefit from robust operations research or impact evaluation. We have funding for such evaluation and it would be conducted by the MRC Consortium in collaboration with in-country partners. We would particularly like to hear of interventions that already have some evidence of promise from preliminary research.

We welcome interventions that seek to work with disabled women and girls or other socially excluded groups, or interventions that will enable us to better understand how dimensions of social exclusion may affect both risk of violence and effectiveness of interventions.

How to submit a pre-application notice: by email to whatworks@mrc.ac.za

Closing date: The closing date for pre-application notices is **25 April 2014**

Advantages of submission of a pre-application notice: We are requesting these in order to assist programme planning. All those who submit them will: (i) be informed of the Request for Applications (RFA) when it is issued; (ii) receive feedback on how to strengthen the proposal for the final applications. Feedback will take the form of a newsletter advising on

how to improve commonly found problems, and up to three bullet points of individual feedback. Beyond this we will not be able to give individual feedback.

Pre-application notice information summary:

- *Closing date for pre-applications:* 25 April 2014
- *Eligible countries:* Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, South Africa, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe; projects working across more than one priority country
- or across a region will also be considered.
- *Location of eligible applicant institutions:* applications from organisations in-country will be preferred, but all institutions are eligible. Applications will not be considered from individuals.
- *Address for submission of pre-application notices:* whatworks@mrc.ac.za
- *Submission of pre-application notice:* A failure to submit a pre-application letter will not preclude application when the Request for Applications (RFA) is issued.

Content of the pre-application notice (1-2 pages):

- Name and address of lead applicant organisation and lead individual
- Name of co-applicant organisations and lead individuals (if any)
- Country (or countries) of intervention
- Expertise in VAWG prevention, research and or intervention evaluation (max. 150 words)
- Description of the intervention including: type of intervention, intervention timeframe, methods to be used, setting, risk factors to be addressed, target group(s) for intervention, preliminary work on the intervention, intervention scale up potential. If a combination of interventions, provide this information for each component.
- Plan for using the resources of the innovation grant, including distribution of responsibilities among co-applicants **or**
- Justification for why the intervention would be suited for operations research, impact evaluation or research on scale up
- Total sum envisaged to be requested for innovation grant (if applying)

To view the announcement online, visit: <http://bit.ly/1j7U11g>

(Call for Applications) Alexia Women's Initiative Grant: Documentary on Women's Issues

Source: Alexia Foundation - Photography that drives change (<http://bit.ly/1r2RwTs>)

The 2014 Alexia Women's Initiative Grant is currently accepting applications.

The Alexia Foundation is pleased to announce the call for entries for the 2014 Women's Initiative Grant which will provide a \$25,000 grant for a project to be produced on a significant issue involving and affecting women anywhere in the world.

The Alexia Foundation's main purpose is to encourage and help photojournalists create stories that drive change. While our traditional grant guidelines put no limits on the subject matter for grant proposals, a number of proposals about women's rights in the last few years have been so powerful that we have been compelled to create a grant specifically on issues relating to women.

Unlike the first Women's Initiative grant, which specifically focused on abuse of women in the United States, this call for entries is open to photographers any where in the world and is intended to permit the photographer to produce **a serious documentary photographic project encompassing any issue involving women anywhere in the world.**

While considering the idea of women's issues, several themes that have been suggested, including: femininity and the culture of abuse; women making a difference, leading, changing things for the better; gender inequality; the direct connection to women and education, and the impact on birth rates, health of children and the productivity of the women; gender discrimination, women in leadership, women in the military, mental health issues. They are by no means intended to influence your proposal, but they may help you start thinking about this topic. They are, in fact, just general themes.

All applications are expected to adhere to photojournalism ethical standards. Photos may not be digitally manipulated beyond the bounds of standard of traditional darkroom practice (dodging, burning and cropping). Scenes may not be manipulated in anyway. No objects maybe introduced or removed and subjects should not be directed. The exception is portraits, which should be clearly identified as portraits.

For more information and a link to apply, visit: <http://bit.ly/1pdN48H>.

The deadline for submission is June 30, 2014 at 2p.m. EST.

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website:

<http://www.firelightfoundation.org/resources/newsflash>

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org

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