

Planning and Carrying Out a Teen Pregnancy Prevention Project

Introduction

If you have completed a needs assessment, you have uncovered a host of new information. You now understand more about the teen pregnancy problem in your community, and you have uncovered resources that can contribute to prevention activities. You may have a reasonably good idea of what you want to do and have probably assembled a core group to begin the work.

To accomplish the tasks that lie ahead, your planning group will need to:

- choose a sound strategy;
- write a plan;
- create an organization;
- begin your activity; and
- establish systems of accountability.

The remainder of this chapter describes each of these elements in greater detail.

Choose a sound strategy

Choosing a sound strategy is a crucial, early task for your planning group because it will form the foundation for all of your thinking, decision-making, and activities. By definition, a strategy is the plan devised to achieve a specific goal, in this case preventing teen pregnancy. It is more than just what you will do; it also incorporates the *how*, *when*, *why*, *with whom*, and *to whom* elements as integral components. As you go through this phase of developing a solid work

plan and building your organization, your initial strategy will likely be refined and amended several times.

Your strategy should be one that:

- is based on sound information (including your needs assessment) and a thorough understanding of the issues;
- reaches teens most at risk for early pregnancy;

BE SURE YOU HAVE COMPLETE AND SPECIFIC INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

- See Chapter 1 (Volume 1), “Promising Approaches to Preventing Teen Pregnancy,” for a discussion of why teens get pregnant.
- See Chapter 12 (Volume 3), “Tailoring a Program to Your Community Through Needs Assessment,” for a discussion of data that indicate teen pregnancy risk.

- focuses on reducing at least one risk factor that leads to early pregnancy among those teens;
- is consistent with community values and priorities and is something the community will support;
- inspires passion and engagement in your group;
- draws on your group’s comparative advantages;
- has readily identifiable allies who are in a position to make things happen;
- draws on resources that are readily available; and
- is a good candidate for funding.

The following activities will help you develop and refine your strategy.

Agree on the lessons learned from your needs assessment

Your group should use the information gathered from your

needs assessment to come to general agreement on three questions:

- Where are the largest concentrations of teen pregnancy?
- What factors contribute to the high rates among those teens?
- What prevention strategies will the community most readily support?

Where are the largest concentrations of teen pregnancy?

Your prevention effort will be more successful in reducing rates of teen pregnancy if you focus on the teens and young people most at risk. Pay special attention to areas where the teen pregnancy rates are increasing. Look for:

Geographic clusters of teen births. Are there a few neighborhoods with unusually high rates that are driving up your community’s overall rates?

Age groups among which teen births are high. Is there an age group that has a particularly high—or increasing—rate of teen pregnancy?

Ethnic/racial groups with high or increasing rates. Are there specific communities whose high rates contribute significantly to the overall rates?

Pockets of poverty connected with high teen pregnancy rates. Teen pregnancy is also related to poverty and social disorganization. Are high rates of teen pregnancy concentrated in communities with a lot of social stress?

Focusing first on areas with the highest level of adolescent births is a good way to reach teens most at risk. As new resources are identified, you can extend your program to other areas within the community.

What factors contribute to the high rates among those teens?

Make sure your strategy addresses the factors that contribute to high rates of teen pregnancy. This can be challenging. The causes of teen pregnancy are complex and interrelated, and many people have their own theories about what will need to happen to bring rates down.

Before your group makes a decision on the strategies it will pursue, try to reach agreement about the factors that matter for your target group of teens. Your needs assessment will be of help here. Remember to ask local experts what they think, as well as parents and teens themselves. Many of the resources listed at the end of this chapter discuss contributing factors.

What prevention strategies will the community most readily support?

You will get more support for your work if it taps into deeply held values and clearly expressed needs in the community. For example, in one midwestern neighborhood, the residents clearly felt that parental involvement with their children was a major concern. The teen pregnancy initiative being designed in that neighborhood responded by creating a prevention program that centered on parent-child activities and communication.

Spend some time discussing what you have learned about the community in which your target population of teens resides or attends school. Be sure to focus on four things:

- what teens think;
- what parents think;
- what community residents think; and
- what important local leaders think.

Be honest about whether teen pregnancy is among the community's list of concerns. If there are other major worries (e.g., drugs or gangs), consider how to integrate teen pregnancy prevention into community efforts that address those issues.

The results of your needs assessment may point to several clear goals, but your community may be ready to take only some of the steps needed to reach those goals. Be sensitive to the extent to which the community is willing to act.

Agree on what motivates your group

What is your planning group passionate about? You have a vast range of choices for action. Choose one major theme that excites your group. Your goal is to find something that people will stay with over several years, and that will attract more people to replace members who leave—and that will attract money, too.

Review your strategy to make sure it responds logically to the needs identified in the community. For example, if new immigrants are at greatest risk in your area, be sure your strategies are culturally appropriate and responsive.

Identify your comparative advantage

Consider the unique strengths that you bring to the issue of

adolescent pregnancy prevention. Identify your organizational assets and generate ideas on how to use these assets to carry out your priorities. Brainstorm with members of your planning group to identify the organizational strengths represented by your group. Examples:

- familiarity with adolescents in the community;
- ability to partner with other organizations;
- connections to policymakers;
- involvement of informal leaders in the community;
- ability to raise money;
- in-depth knowledge of the strengths and gaps in services currently existing in the community;
- creativity and commitment to the issue;
- influential organization and leadership;
- participation of local employers;
- participation of local faith communities;
- involvement of the school system;
- financial resources in the form of in-kind contributions, grants, or access to similar sources; and

MAKE YOUR STRATEGY COMPELLING

- **It will increase your chances of creating an effective initiative.**
- **A compelling strategy that is popular with the community insulates itself from controversy.**

- willing volunteers.

Think about what strengths make your group uniquely able to contribute to teen pregnancy prevention in your community. Build your strategy around your strengths.

Find your natural allies

Outside of your planning group, what other support exists for your prevention effort? You may have met—or learned about—school officials, elected representatives, foundation staff, agency staff, civic groups, newspaper editors, business leaders, clergy leaders, parents, and teens who want to work with you. You also have identified programs and existing networks and committees designed to address youth issues. These groups can assist you in putting your prevention program in place.

Depending on the strategy you choose, you may need new or different partners. For example, if you choose to strengthen family life education in the schools, your organizational partners will be different from those you would work with if you chose to focus on the job readiness of teens. Make sure that you have the right mix of allies to support your strategy.

EXAMPLES OF NATURAL ALLIES

- **school officials**
- **elected representatives**
- **foundation staff**
- **agency staff**
- **civic groups**
- **newspaper editors**
- **local businesspersons**
- **clergy leaders**
- **parents**
- **teens**

Identify available community resources

Your needs assessment will have helped document the types of resources, as well as gaps, that exist in the community. For example, you may have found that while schools currently offer education about sexuality, pregnancy, and parenthood, such education is offered only once and relatively late in the school curriculum. Or, you may have found that too few students have the opportunity to participate in community service activities or school-to-career activities.

What have you learned about resources that could be used in your prevention effort? You may have identified potential meeting places or in-kind services. Make a list of all the possible resources that could be put in place for your program.

Identify likely funding sources

Are there immediate sources of funding you can go after? Make a list of what you have learned

FUNDING SOURCES

- **government grants**
- **non-governmental grants**
- **corporate donations**
- **individual donations**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

See Chapter 14 (Volume 3), “Raising Funds for Teen Pregnancy Prevention.”

in your needs assessment about sources of support.

The community may feel ready to adopt a wide variety of pregnancy prevention strategies, but its funds, including in-kind contributions, may be too limited to work on all fronts at the same time. Assessing the costs required for different interventions may help establish what funding strategies to pursue first. The most financially accessible goal is often the right place to start.

Resource development is key to the success of your community's efforts. Recognize that it can

require substantial time and effort, so be sure that you are working on several funding options simultaneously. You may seek help from foundations that sometimes provide planning grants of between \$10,000-\$25,000 to help groups get started.

Prepare alternatives in case your initial requests for funding are not successful. You may also want to explore ways that your community can better use the resources it already has to reduce teen pregnancy. For example, school-based health clinics originally began because local health providers established services in school settings so that they could best reach the population they were mandated to serve.

You may also want to invite several of the potential funders into the planning process so that their ideas and suggestions can help shape your work.

Be alert for opportunities to link teen pregnancy prevention to other issues and funding streams. For example, some government agencies are beginning to focus on school-to-work and community volunteer service opportunities, many of which can help to reduce teen pregnancy.

In-kind support can provide a bridge as you explore different

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

- **recognize that many funding options require substantial time and effort to develop**
- **be sure to devote adequate attention to this issue**
- **pursue several funding options simultaneously**
- **take advantage of in-kind contributions**
- **work on lower-cost initiatives while you are applying for support for other program efforts**

funding options. It also can compensate for restrictions that may exist on the use of grant funds. Together with funds, in-kind contributions can sustain a comprehensive array of services over a long period of time. For example, expenses for food are often not covered by a traditional state or federal grant, yet, without this small incentive, few teenagers may attend an after-school program. Donations of snacks that appeal to teens can help ensure the long-term success of a program.

Agree on your main strategy

After looking at all the angles, choose a main strategy for your group. It could focus primarily on educating teens, their parents, and the community, or improving services, or working to change policies that bear on teen pregnancy prevention. The role you choose will depend on the membership of your planning group and their interests, the needs that emerged from your assessment, the resources available to you, and the extent to which you work in partnership with other groups.

If you are creating a formal community coalition—or even working with partners on a more informal basis—you may want to consider one or more of the following roles typically played by coalitions (Huberman, 1994).

These roles also can be relevant for the work of individual teen pregnancy prevention programs:

Advocate for teen pregnancy prevention. This role involves supporting and encouraging programs and strategies that affect adolescent sexuality, pregnancy, and parenting. You may work for specific policy changes with elected officials, schools, social services, medical providers, community groups, religious organizations, corporations, and the media.

Catalyst for service development. As a catalyst, you could develop pilot programs that are tested by established groups. You could develop materials, such as directories, to provide an overview of all prevention efforts around the community or state. You could also help agencies improve their services by providing case consultation, joint intake and assessments, and co-located services.

Facilitator of communication among service providers. In this role, you could serve as a resource and referral center for the community. For example, you could organize a series of meetings of key providers and community representatives to develop an action plan related to adolescent pregnancy prevention. Sharing program information, enhancing professional networking, and

sharing facilities and other resources are also aspects of this role.

Coordinator of multi-agency efforts. As a coordinator, you could facilitate and assist providers in prevention efforts. For example, you could coordinate educational and service efforts by different youth-serving agencies, family life educators, and health care providers to ensure that adolescents in need of services have access to them. You could monitor activities to assess the progress being made by each group or member. You could also work to establish cross-referral networks where

agency staff can refer clients to other agencies, and develop joint program goals and objectives with partners.

Community educator. Educators provide information concerning adolescent sexuality, pregnancy, and parenting to the community. For example, you could provide information to groups such as religious youth group directors, campus ministries, women's and men's clubs, university or college campuses, medical societies, health care providers, county commissions, city councils, school boards, PTAs, and schools.

Write a plan

Good ideas become good programs through sound planning. Writing a plan will challenge and clarify your thinking. It will transform your general ideas

into a realistic and clear roadmap for action.

Develop a statement of purpose or mission

A mission statement reflects the community's commitment to reducing the incidence of adolescent pregnancy. It should be clear, direct, and motivating. Make it broad enough that a wide group of audiences—adolescents, parents, volunteers, agencies, the business sector, and others—will understand and support your intent.

A MISSION STATEMENT...

- **presents a broad vision of your community's commitment**

GOALS...

- **describe how you will achieve your mission**

OBJECTIVES...

- **explain the "how" in specific, measurable, realistic, and time-framed terms**

From vision to reality: Transforming a mission statement into measurable, time-framed objectives

Mission Statement

To reduce the teen pregnancy rate in our community by providing teens with a greater knowledge of the work and education opportunities available to them and by strengthening policies and programming.

Goals

- To reduce the number of teenagers who are sexually active.
- To increase the number of sexually active teenagers who are able to access family planning care.
- To increase the number of businesses and other community groups who partner with local schools so that students have increased access to mentoring and work experiences, as well as to an increased number of college scholarships.

Objectives

- By January 2000, 500 additional adolescents in need of family planning services will gain access to care through a system of coordinated clinics in the community.
- By January 2000, 350 students will be matched to mentoring and job shadowing opportunities in the community.

Determine your goals

Goals bring your mission down to earth. They describe how you will carry out your mission and address the problems identified in your needs assessment. Goals should be clear and achievable.

Define your objectives

Objectives are the specific ways and means for achieving your goals. They define the activities you will pursue over time. Objectives should be *specific*,

measurable, *realistic*, and *time-framed*. They should be stated in such a way that you can measure and monitor them over time to assess whether you have achieved them.

The example above shows how a group's vision for reducing teen pregnancy rates in its community can be transformed into goals and objectives that are clear and specific enough to effectively guide its activities.

Examples of state coalition mission statements

- "To provide leadership in Washington state to reduce adolescent pregnancy and to promote coordinated services for pregnant and parenting adolescents."
- "To strengthen policies and programming related to adolescent pregnancy, prevention, and parenting in Minnesota."
- "To lower the pregnancy rate in California by providing

adolescent pregnancy prevention information and education throughout the state; to serve as the primary source of information for professionals in California working with pregnant and parenting teens and to act as a liaison with similar efforts nationwide; to address the needs of pregnant and parenting teens."

Create a work plan and budget

Once your goals and objectives are clear, you will be ready to develop a work plan and budget. When you start, focus most on a limited number of high priority objectives; include regular milestones and make sure that you can achieve them.

Give adequate attention to your financial resources. Make sure

you have enough to pay for:

- a staff person, if necessary;
- your ongoing work; and
- new plans and activities.

Revisit your work plan and budget on a semi-annual basis to be sure that you are taking the necessary steps to accomplish each of your objectives. The box below provides questions that can help you.

Create an organization

As you develop your plan of action, consider the type of organization, network, or coalition required to implement your plan.

Create a governance structure and choose leaders

Review the leadership that brought you to this point. Ask if you need new leaders for the tasks that lie ahead. Consider

what types of individuals and skills you will need to add to your “organizational home” in order to ensure that the individuals in leadership positions best fit this stage of development.

Leadership qualities that are especially important for getting work done include:

- professional expertise;

Assess your work plan

- Is it based on the results of a needs assessment?
- Does the plan have activities geared to specific individuals, agencies, and/or community-wide efforts?
- Does it set out specific steps?
- Does it include age-appropriate activities for the adolescents involved?
- Does it include multiple strategies aimed at pregnancy prevention?
- If it involves a coalition, does it coordinate program activities and encourage joint planning among partners?
- Does it incorporate support from multiple funding streams?

FOR MORE ON THE SEVEN MAIN TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES...

See Chapter 11 (Volume 3), “Getting Your Community Involved in a Teen Pregnancy Prevention Project.”

- strong standing in the community;
- expertise in planning and implementation;
- ability to manage and supervise staff; and
- ability to represent the organization to the media, public officials, funders, and other audiences.

Create a list of the various leadership roles and committees you will need to carry out your work. Be sure to set term limits and identify and prepare the next generation of leaders. Make sure that only a few individuals

rotate off your board at any one time as you engage new members. Consider ways to involve former members. For example, use their expertise to plan a special event.

If you are working within a formal coalition, one organization is probably acting as “lead agency” to direct and coordinate the work of the various members. Even in less formal networks, one organization may take a leading role. The checklist on the next page summarizes the qualities needed for a lead agency. Use it as an

FIELD NOTES

Characteristics of a well-organized teen pregnancy initiative

- adequate funding with diversified revenues
- adequate staffing
- clear mission and focus
- long-range (5-10 years) plan in place
- strong board chair
- diverse geographic and cultural representation on staff and board
- strong partnerships with media, business, elected officials, foundations, state agencies, voluntary organizations, religious institutions, and other interested and affected groups
- strong partnerships with other statewide organizations
- working on youth health issues so that the connections among teen pregnancy, alcohol, sexual abuse, and poverty can be recognized and addressed
- strong leadership that provides one voice on teen pregnancy issues and that effectively disseminates facts and dispels myths about teen pregnancy
- good public awareness of organization among youth, citizens, and policy makers
- effective management of controversy and opposition

Donna Fishman, MOAPP

Checklist for a lead agency or organization

Consider the resources and capabilities of your proposed lead agency against the following criteria. Depending on the results, you may decide that the agency fits the job, or you may want to consider others.

	Yes	No
1. Has skilled staff (or willingness to hire additional staff) to carry out planned work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Includes representatives on its board of directors from the the public and private sectors (e.g., government agencies, businesses, foundations).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Can receive and allocate funds from both public and private sectors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Has the support of appropriate levels of government.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Has technical expertise, either in-house or through subcontract, to:		
a. conduct research and report findings, as necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. work with community members to establish priorities and action plans based upon findings and community-based consensus-building process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Has:		
a. a strong, positive image in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. a positive reputation among all sectors of the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. a good track record on adolescent health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. a history of community involvement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. expertise in designing and administering a community-wide initiative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Is able to:		
a. serve as a liaison to the media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. help educate all sectors of the community regarding the needs of adolescents in the community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. mobilize a number of different community sectors in instituting a plan of action	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Brindis et al., 1991

objective tool to determine who should lead your efforts.

Revisit your membership policy

Although you have previously dealt with issues pertaining to membership in the coalition, board, or whatever your group structure is, in this phase of your efforts, consider in more detail the skills you need to implement your plan. For example, if media strategies are an important priority, then you will need to recruit individuals who have specific types of media expertise. You may want people who can develop public service announcements, or create media packages and news releases, or buy airtime, or be spokespersons. Be as clear as you can about the skills you need.

At the same time, be flexible. Your needs will change as your effort expands.

Determine staffing needs and how to meet them

Selecting the most appropriate and qualified staff is crucial to the success of all of your efforts. Make sure that you have enough staff support to carry out your plan. Consider what types of staff your group will require. Be sure that the staff mirror the communities in which you are planning to work. Along with professional expertise, it is

IF YOU HAVE LIMITED FUNDS FOR STAFF, CONSIDER...

asking a collaborating agency to provide a individual for a percentage of time as an in-kind contribution.

important that staff be multicultural and multilingual (as appropriate), and experienced with community development and the subject of adolescent pregnancy prevention.

While it may not always be possible to find the ideal individual, it is important to choose staff who feel a personal commitment and passion on the subject of youth, youth development, and the role that postponing having a child can have in influencing young people's future. While limited funding may preclude hiring a full staff, explore the possibility of sharing staff and combining staff from different agencies. Think broadly and creatively about the best ways to match your needs with the skills and interests of staff available to you.

WHEN MATCHING SKILLS TO NEEDS, THINK BROADLY

For example, an agency that focuses on immunization may have staff who could add teen pregnancy prevention to their outreach efforts with young teen parents and their babies.

HEART of OKC (Healthy, Empowered, and Responsible Teens of Oklahoma City) creates a governance structure

A major issue in developing a teen pregnancy prevention initiative in a neighborhood or community involves establishing the type of governance structure(s) that will be appropriate for the initial planning and implementation process. This structure must also be effective in maintaining the effort over time. HEART of OKC is one of 13 Community Partnerships funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as part of their special teenage pregnancy prevention initiative. The project is coordinated through a hub organization, the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy, which works with a variety of partnerships in central city neighborhoods with high needs.

At the outset of the project, HEART of OKC staff held two discussions involving a variety of community leaders and representatives of programs to determine where the project might start, how the program could link with existing programs, and how to structure the group so that “something real would happen for teens” as a result of the activities. The overwhelming response from the community representatives was to:

- focus on changing the attitudes of policymakers and community leaders toward youth from one that focused on punitive perceptions to one

that emphasized positive perspectives; and

- avoid establishing another single-issue coalition.

The community already had a teen pregnancy coalition composed of more than 20 different service providers working with pregnant and parenting teens, sexuality education, and specific prevention curricula. The community was also home to numerous statewide coalitions dealing with issues related to the health and well-being of children and youth, such as child abuse, tobacco use prevention, and substance abuse prevention. Thus, HEART of OKC started by working through a core steering committee representing the hub organization, the university health sciences center, and local agencies to provide project leadership in the selected neighborhoods.

HEART of OKC placed teen pregnancy prevention within a larger picture of youth development and created a Prevention Program Model that promoted an asset-building approach to prevention and linked eight key prevention opportunities with specific activities and various community sectors. A part-time Community Coordinator assisted each of the targeted central city neighborhoods to assess their needs and assets and establish youth and adult task forces that outlined

FOR MORE ON DEALING WITH CONFLICT AND OPPOSITION...

See **Chapter 17 (Volume 3), “Moving Forward in the Face of Conflict.”**

Begin your activity

You don't need a highly visible launch to get your project underway. Just begin at a logical starting point. If you are having difficulty getting started due to differences of opinion or opposition, find ways to start at least some part of your plan.

The box on the next page gives a dozen tips to help you get started and maintain momentum.

As you build momentum, continue to:

- look for additional opportunities to highlight the needs of adolescents and the importance of pregnancy prevention;
 - work on multiple levels simultaneously; meetings alone probably will not affect the population you wish to serve;
 - seek the advice and counsel of those who are more experienced in the field in order to avoid approaches that have failed in the past; and
 - keep your sense of humor and dedication.
- share your results with others in the community;

neighborhood youth development plans based on the Program Model.

At the community-wide level, HEART of OKC developed a “Network of Opportunities” for teen pregnancy prevention within various community sectors and potential program settings. The “Network of Opportunities” focuses on honoring and building upon what is already available in the community, then linking new allies and resources to fill unmet needs. For example, HEART of OKC is currently working with the OKC Community Council, the College of Public Health, and a substance-abuse coalition (funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention) to create a formal entity in the city that would operate under the auspices of the Community Council to convene and coordinate youth development activities and initiatives.

The structures and relationships that have evolved through HEART of OKC give the effort a way to involve neighborhood youth and adults in meaningful ways. Groups and individuals can move in and out of activities as their time and interest permit, and the program can quickly and flexibly respond to new opportunities as they present themselves.

*Sharon Rodine, Project Director,
HEART of OKC*

Establish accountability systems

Your goal is to have a sound prevention program that helps reduce teen pregnancy rates. Pay close attention to the quality of your work. Make sure that those to whom you are accountable are connected to your work, and that you make sure

they know what you are doing and how it is progressing.

Develop internal and external reporting relationships

In conducting your work, you will need to consider to whom

Tips for maintaining early momentum

1. Pick concrete and “do-able” activities that will help your group accomplish early successes.
2. Be realistic in your timeline and in what you will be able to accomplish within a short period of time.
3. Build in 90-day action plans, action agendas, and ongoing activity reviews to be sure that you are not losing sight of your group’s major goals, objectives, and activities.
4. Learn from what has worked along the way. Incorporate those lessons into your future efforts.
5. If you are not making steady progress, stop, look, and listen. Diagnose what is happening and assess if any of the factors responsible are within your control.
6. Continue to educate yourself regarding the issue of adolescent pregnancy prevention so that you can be knowledgeable about the subject.
7. Celebrate your successes.
8. Plan for the future by thinking about strategies to sustain success. For example, find ways that prevention efforts can be incorporated into and coordinated with other community efforts.
9. Be sure that you have defined specific implementation plans and that the individual(s) selected to carry them out are given appropriate support.
10. Schedule opportunities for individuals to report on their current activities and the ways in which they are implementing the objectives for which they are responsible.
11. If several groups are working concurrently on different objectives, be sure that each is aware of what they others are doing in order to prevent duplication of effort and to assure maximum coordination.
12. Twice a year, conduct an in-depth review of the progress being made, whether the objectives are still relevant and appropriate, and whether the timelines are realistic to the task.

FOR GUIDANCE ON HOW TO ASSESS YOUR PROGRESS IN CHANGING BEHAVIORS AND REDUCING PREGNANCY RATES...

See Chapter 16 (Volume 3), “Building Evaluation Into Your Work.”

you are accountable and who will judge your efforts. Your funders should receive a quarterly or annual report covering the progress you have made. Other community groups, including parents and adolescents living in the community, also will be interested in assessing the progress you are making. Network partners, where applicable, will also be interested, as they will likely need to justify their participation in this effort to their parent agency.

For each of these groups, different types of information will likely be of interest. Keeping everyone informed also will help encourage partners and volunteers to live up to the commitments they’ve made. However, the bottom line for each will be whether or not your efforts are making a difference in the lives of adolescents.

Establish milestones for organizational progress

Establishing clear milestones and setting up a periodic review

process will help you gauge the progress of your group’s efforts, whether you are a large coalition or a small network of agencies working in the health field.

The following chart will help you track whether your organizational efforts are well-balanced and proceeding as planned in the early, middle, and mature stages of your work. Note that components from the early and middle stages remain important as building blocks to sustain a mature organization. Mature organizations should rate themselves on all three scales. Use these milestones to make sure that no one part of the organization lags behind. The following items can be applied to small or large groups. Be careful about the types of expectations and outcomes you expect for a temporary group, in contrast to a larger, more formal coalition.

Milestones for organizational progress

Phase I. Initial Organizing

	(not at all)				(fully)
1. To what extent are the following aspects of the group in place?					
a. a clear mission statement	1	2	3	4	5
b. goals, objectives, and activities that are logically connected	1	2	3	4	5
c. a group or organizational chart	1	2	3	4	5
d. a system to gather information as needed	1	2	3	4	5
2. To what extent is there a specifically designated individual who serves as the coordinator or staff for the group?	1	2	3	4	5
3. To what extent has the group conducted a needs and assets assessment to establish what is needed?	1	2	3	4	5
4. To what extent has the group established a comprehensive work plan based on relevant information?	1	2	3	4	5

Score each of the following items on the following scale, with (1) = not at all; (2) = as recipients of information only; (3) = as providers of information and advice; (4) = as implementers of decisions; and (5) = as full participants in the decision-making.

	(not at all)				(full participants)
5. How much do each of the following community representatives (where relevant) participate in the group's activities?					
a. younger adolescents (ages 10-14)	1	2	3	4	5
b. older adolescents (ages 15-19)	1	2	3	4	5
c. parents	1	2	3	4	5
d. religious leaders	1	2	3	4	5
e. business leaders	1	2	3	4	5
f. representatives of youth-serving organizations	1	2	3	4	5
g. health care providers	1	2	3	4	5
h. school teachers and administrators	1	2	3	4	5
i. representatives of the juvenile justice system	1	2	3	4	5
j. social service providers	1	2	3	4	5
k. representatives of arts and cultural organizations	1	2	3	4	5
l. representatives of the news media	1	2	3	4	5
m. local, county, and state government officials	1	2	3	4	5

Phase II. Middle Stage

Assess your group's progress on the following milestones, where applicable.

	(not at all)				(fully)
1. To what extent does your group:					
a. serve as a clearinghouse for information and resources?	1	2	3	4	5
b. provide a forum for joint planning and encourage efforts to use existing and/or new resources to prevent teen pregnancy?	1	2	3	4	5
c. identify different funding sources that it combines to allow greater flexibility in meeting goals?	1	2	3	4	5
d. include in-kind contributions from its members, as well as from other community groups as part of its funding plan?	1	2	3	4	5
2. How would you rate the group's commitment to the following:					
a. assisting parents in their roles as primary providers to their children	1	2	3	4	5
b. providing adolescents with the education and skills needed to be sexually responsible	1	2	3	4	5
c. providing an opportunity for different approaches to be heard and accepted within the same community	1	2	3	4	5
d. providing opportunities to work with adolescents and their families in shaping prevention strategies	1	2	3	4	5

Phase III. Established Stage

Rate your group on the following issues.

	(not at all)				(fully)
1. To what extent has the group been able to achieve:					
a. support for its pregnancy prevention mission within the community?	1	2	3	4	5
b. support for its specific pregnancy prevention strategies within the community?	1	2	3	4	5
c. a credible reputation within the community?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Has the group been able to sustain its efforts through:					
a. a diversified funding base?	1	2	3	4	5
b. a diversified membership base?	1	2	3	4	5

Adapted from Brindis and Peterson, 1996

Conclusion

The organization and plan you create will grow and change over time. Remain flexible and make changes as your needs change. The most important thing to focus on is how you

can best reduce teen pregnancy rates in the community by mobilizing a diverse group of individuals and organizations committed to improving the lives of youth.

References

Brindis, C.D., Card, J.J., Niego, S., & Peterson, J.L. (1996). *Assessing your community's needs and assets: A collaborative approach to adolescent pregnancy prevention*. Los Altos, CA: Sociometrics Corporation.

Brindis, C.D., & Peterson, J.L. (1996). *Teen pregnancy prevention coalitions: A tool for assessing progress*. Unpublished tool. San Francisco, CA: Center for Reproductive Health Policy

Research, University of California, San Francisco.

Brindis, C.D., Pittman, K., Reyes, P., & Adams-Taylor, S. (1991). *Adolescent pregnancy prevention: A guidebook for communities*. Palo Alto, CA: Health Promotion Resource Center Distribution Center, Stanford University.

Huberman, B. (1994). *Unpublished materials*. North Carolina: Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Coalition of North Carolina

Programs mentioned in this chapter

Healthy, Empowered, and Responsible Teens of Oklahoma City (HEART of OKC)

Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy
Sharon Rodine, Project Director
420 N.W. 13th St., Suite 101
Oklahoma City, OK 73103
(405) 236-5437
Fax: (405) 236-1690
sjrodine@aol.com

Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention, and Parenting (MOAPPP)

Donna Fishman
P.O. Box 40392
St. Paul, MN 55104
(651) 644-1447
Toll Free in MN (800) 657-3697
Fax: (651) 644-1417
www.cyfc.umn.edu/moappp/

Useful resources on community organization and coalition development

Each of these guides and books provides useful and practical advice on beginning and maintaining a successful group or program. They can be obtained by writing or calling the addresses and telephone numbers provided here. Those without a listed price are available free.

Marketing Workbook for Non-Profit Organizations

Strategic Planning Workbook for Non-Profit Organizations

Amherst A. Wilder Foundation
919 Lafond Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
(800) 274-6024

These two guides are excellent resources for use at the state or local level. The workbooks are easy to read and understand and are filled with action-oriented activities for groups. Whether or not your group chooses to use a consultant for marketing and strategic planning, read these resources first so you are familiar with the processes. You will also be more equipped to hire a consultant.

Mobilizing for Action

Brindis, C.D., & Davis, L.
Advocates for Youth
1025 Vermont Ave., NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 347-5700

This book is Volume I of a five-volume series entitled *Communities Responding to the Challenge of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention*. Other volumes, which can be purchased separately (\$25 each) or as part of the whole series (\$115), are:

- “Building Strong Foundations, Ensuring the Future” (Volume II);
- “Designing Effective Family Life Education Programs” (Volume III);
- “Improving Contraceptive Access for Teens” (Volume IV); and
- “Linking Pregnancy Prevention to Youth Development” (Volume V).

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention: A Guidebook for Communities

Brindis, C.D., Pittman, K., Reyes, P., & Adams-Taylor, S.
Health Promotion Resource Center
Distribution Center, Stanford
University
1000 Welch Rd.
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1885
(650) 723-003
Cost: Approximately \$29.00

This 1991 book was written for groups that want to take action, and presents a step-by-step guide to all aspects of a successful program, from coalition-building to fundraising, needs assessment to impact evaluation. It includes a resource directory and many charts/worksheets.

Building and Maintaining Effective Coalitions

Feigherty, E., & Rogers, T.
Health Promotion Resource Center
Distribution Center, Stanford
University
1000 Welch Rd.
Palo Alto, CA 94304-1885
(650) 723-003
Cost: Approximately \$7.50

This 8-page “how-to guide,” published in January 1990, describes coalitions, reasons for starting one, what functions they can perform, the role of members and recruiting them, how to run and evaluate a coalition, and a helpful section on barriers that can cause coalition failure. It is available as part of the *Community Health Promotion Kit*: Section 5 “Building a Team.”

What One Can Do: Resource Manual for Development of a Community Council on Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention

Huberman, B.

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
Coalition of North Carolina
1300 Baxter St., Suite 171
Charlotte, NC 25804
(704) 335-1313

This manual is extremely helpful for both local and statewide coalitions. Chapters cover issues such as local council organization, board of directors and board meetings, employees, program planning and evaluation, finance and fundraising, legislation, statistics, and resources.

Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets.

Kretzmann, J.P., & McKnight, J.L.

Center for Urban Affairs and
Policy Research
Neighborhood Innovations Network
Northwestern University
2040 Sheridan Rd.
Evanston, IL 60208
(708) 491-3518

Cost: Approximately \$30

This 1993 guide focuses on community assets, rather than problems and deficiencies, and presents ways to identify and best use the gifts, talents, and resources of individuals and organizations for community change.

Community Health Promotion Kit

Division of Health Promotion
and Education
Minnesota Department of Health
717 Delaware St. SE.
Minneapolis, MN 55414
(612) 623-5213

The Kit was created to help communities come together to discover ways to promote health and prevent chronic disease, such as cancer or heart disease. It can be easily adapted to adolescent pregnancy prevention. The Kit allows you to pick and choose from a collection of resources, tip sheets, tools, information

sheets, samples, and worksheets that have been developed and used by communities throughout the U.S. It can be used at all stages of health promotion—from organizing your community to locating funding sources.

REACH Resource Guide: Guide to Activating Your Advisory Group
Resources for Enhancing Adolescent
Community Health (REACH)
Resource Center
Colorado Department of Public
Health and Environment
Adolescent Health Program
4300 Cherry Creek Dr. South
Denver, CO 80222-1530
(303) 692-2326

This helpful guide provides step-by-step direction on how to form an advisory group (as applicable to coalition, task force, etc.). The authors drew from experience working with state and local agencies to form such groups. They have also culled information from the literature of several disciplines on this topic. The guide is written broadly and can be easily applied to organizing a community-based adolescent pregnancy prevention effort.

Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining, and Enjoying the Journey

Winer, M., & Ray, K.
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation
The Wilder Foundation
Publishing Center
919 Lafond Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
(800) 274-6024
Cost: Approximately \$30

This 1994 guide/workbook provides details on, and examples of, collaborations and how to make them work successfully.

*Together We Can: A Guide for
Crafting a Pro-Family System of
Education and Human Services*

Melavill, A.L., et al.

Center for the Study of Social Policy
and the Institute for Educational
Leadership

Available from the U.S. Government
Printing Office, Superintendent of
Documents, Mail Stop: SSOP,
Washington, DC 20402-9328 (Stock
No. 065-000-00563-8, \$11).

Developed by a group of researchers,
administrators, and practitioners, this
manual provides a practical guide for
improving the coordination of education,
health, and human services for at-risk
children and families. Divided into three
main sections, the guide leads readers
through a five-stage process of group col-
laboration.