

Jessica Marfeo  
RI Department of Health WHAC  
Teen Ambassador project  
To raise awareness of educating teen girls on stds and teen pregnancy

For my teen project I wanted to raise awareness of how we need to educate our teen girls in importance of stds and teen pregnancy. I feel this is an important because it is becoming overshadowed by society by pills, shots, music, movies, and Hollywood stars. one out of every four girls has an std and one out of three girls will be pregnant by age nineteen. Some decisions we make can be prevented, these are some ways I think can be prevented through education.

During my research I found that every year more then fifteen million people catch an std, most of the percent being people under the age of 25. According to cdc. Three top stds found is chlamydia (most commonly found among women), human papillomavirus, and trichomoniasis. Women and especially young women are hit the hardest by chlamydia; with the fifteen to nineteen year olds having the highest chlamydia rate in 2006 being 2,862.7. Followed by the females aged from twenty to twenty four the percent being 2,797.0. I also found that young girls are overlooking the consequences and saying "it won't happen to me," even a common expression said among my friends when this topic comes up. With rates going up cdc recommends screening for all sexually active women under the age of twenty six, but unfortunately many sexually active young women are not being tested, in part of reflecting a lack of awareness from providers about screening and the facts.

Teen girls are saying they have pressure to become sexually active. The pressure is all around them being on TV, movies, on-line, friends, or a boyfriend. But what many teen girls are not seeing is the consequences- having a baby before being ready or getting an std that can hurt you like herpes, chlamydia, and HIV. Teen girls need to know it is ok not to be sexually active. Recently the U.S. Department of health released ways that can take off the pressure: here are a few spend time with friends who also think its ok not to be sexually active. Go out with a group instead of only one person you are hanging out with. Be in control of your decisions!

My event "Its all about me girls night out", took place at women and infants hospital auditorium B on May 8,2008 starting at 6:30 p.m. Thirty people teen girls, moms, aunts, guardians, and even grandmothers gained knowledge of knowing what can happen when you make a decision that can change your life forever. With guest speakers Dr. Flanagan from Hasbro children's hospital educating them on teen pregnancy and stds, also answering any questions they had during her talk. She also told them about her involvement with stds and teen pregnancy. The second guest speaker was Katrina, a soon to be graduate from SStar birth who shared her touching story and how SStar birth has helped her. Our last guest speaker was Lisa Dwyer who is the substance abuse consular at SStar birth who talked about their program and how she helps. The last segment of the seminar was question and answer were girls attending and even my friends who were unable to attend asked their questions.

For my teen project I did a seminar to educate teen girls and women about stds and teen pregnancy. My seminar was not to tell the girls what was right or wrong but to educate them on the effects and consequences of one answer. It was to educate them and benefit respecting yourself, health, and your body. I wanted them to have the knowledge of knowing what can happen when you make a decision that can change your life. Together everyone of us can gain the knowledge to help yourself a friends, or a loved one. With one answer and one voice you can change your life and most importantly it was a night all about you!