



CC Reports (a), 1/28/03

March 7, 2003

Dear ACAP Friends;

The New Year brings new initiatives for the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP) and new opportunities for the community to "Get Real" about reducing Alexandria's teen pregnancy rate.

During the last quarter of 2002, we conducted focus groups with Alexandria parents to determine how often and how comfortable parents are when talking to their children about sex. The results, presented to Mayor Kerry Donley and ACAP in December, showed a strong desire by parents to receive more information and support on the topic of how to talk to their children about abstinence, sex, birth control, HIV/STDs and teen pregnancy.

Some highlights from the English and Spanish focus groups include:

Parents of children aged 9-12

- Few are talking to their kids about sex and teen pregnancy.
- The primary reason for the lack of conversation is parents believe their children are not ready for a discussion and / or are not thinking about sex.

Parents of children aged 13-15

- Parents assume children are getting taught about sex in school.
- Discussing birth control options is viewed as giving approval for sexual activity.

Parents of children aged 16-19

- Parents are more likely to have discussions about sex with children of this age group.
- Most fall into two categories: those recognizing that their child is sexually active, and those that do not want to ask.

Two key points that parents agreed on are:

1. Abstinence is the major message they want to deliver.
2. For younger children and younger teens, they want to deliver the message with a focus on values; for older teens, the message would be to protect their future.



Mayor Kerry Donley gave his endorsement for ACAP to proceed with plans for Alexandria's first Parent Peer Education Program. A general overview of the program was presented in January at meetings of the Alexandria City Council and Youth Policy Commission, and was enthusiastically received.

ACAP's goal is to create a peer education group for parents of 5th – 9th grade children. Parents will be trained as peer educators to teach other parents how to talk to their children about sex. The DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy has had a similar program for the past three years and has agreed to assist Alexandria in re-creating this program for our community.

Fifteen Parent Educators as well as fifteen Parent Mentors are needed for this program, which begins in late March. Involvement includes an initial training, which ACAP provides at no charge, a manageable time commitment, and an invaluable life experience.

Please contact our office and sign up to participate in this very worthwhile program. We can be reached at (703) 838-5030 x 103 or Patsieann.Misiti@ci.alexandria.va.us

Sincerely,



Patsieann T. Misiti
Community Education Specialist
Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy



Parent Peer Educator Project:
Talking to Your Teen About Love, Sex and Relationships

The Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy needs *your help* to reduce the City's teen pregnancy rate 25% by 2005!

Alexandria's 2000 teen pregnancy rate of 56.4 pregnancies per 1000 was 79% higher than the state rate of 31.5 pregnancies per 1000 females.

Research shows that teen pregnancy is less likely to occur when boys and girls feel connected with trusted and supportive adults, like parents and parent figures, with whom they can have comfortable conversations and receive accurate information about love, sex and relationships.

With generous support from webMethods Foundation and INOVA Health System, The Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP) will be training Alexandria parents to become Parent Peer Educators. Our goal for the Parent Peer Educator project is to support parents to facilitate workshops and community dialogues that encourage other parents to talk with their teens about love, sex and relationships.

The following is a brief description of the project. Parent responsibilities are detailed in Phases one and two. Parent mentor responsibilities can be found on page three.

PHASE ONE: Alexandria PARENTS participate in a one-day session that teaches them how to become Parent Peer Educators.

Saturday, April 5, 2003, 9:00 – 4:30 P.M. City Hall, 301 King St.– Room 3000.

This session provides skills and techniques parents will need to conduct the workshop *Talking to Your Teen About Love, Sex and Relationships*.

Parents receive a script for the workshop, videotape, a list of community agencies, and will learn how to teach other parents the following:

- The importance of using correct language with your teen when referring to the human body and teen pregnancy prevention.
- A discussion about the messages influencing teens and the need for parents to communicate their own values and messages about love, sex and relationships.
- A discussion of barriers and solutions that lead to more open and comfortable parent/child communication about love, sex and relationships.

** Breakfast and lunch will be provided at the session.*

PHASE TWO: Teams of two Parent Peer Educators co-lead the workshop, *Talking to Your Teen About Love, Sex and Relationships*

Commitment needed from Parent Peer Educators:

- Find a site that allows for a safe, comfortable and quiet environment to host your 2-3 hour workshop, such as a church, school, or community center.
- Plan logistics: coordinate where and when the workshops will take place; you will need to plan for 2-3 hours for an effective workshop.
- Purchase refreshments for the workshop, ACAP will reimburse up to \$35.
- Recruit a minimum of six parents, maximum of 15 parents, to participate in the workshop. You must have a minimum of 6 parents to receive the \$50 stipend. Parents must be residents of the City of Alexandria.
- One week prior to the workshop, contact ACAP with the date, time, and location of workshop; as well as a list of confirmed parents who will attend the workshop.
- Meet with ACAP for a prep session at least one week prior to conducting the first workshop to ensure consistent delivery of workshop content
- Co-lead a minimum of two workshops within the eight weeks following completion of the training.
- To ensure that you are up-to date with the workshop content, you must complete a workshop at least every three months or you will need to be retrained.
- Submit participant evaluations from each workshop to ACAP no later than one week following the workshop. Evaluation forms must be submitted to receive the \$50 stipend.

ACAP will provide:

- \$50 stipend for each Parent Peer Educator for each workshop **up to four workshops**. This stipend is compensation for the planning, recruitment and facilitation of each workshop.
- \$35 reimbursement to cover the cost of refreshments and additional materials. Receipts must be submitted to receive reimbursement
- Technical support for Parent Peer Educators for first four workshops
- Materials for the workshops

ACAP would like to thank the DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy for use of their materials and for their leadership and support.

PARENT MENTORS participate in a basic training workshop.

Wednesday, March 26, 2003, 9:00 – 12:30 PM. City Hall, 301 King St. - Room 3000

Responsibilities of a Parent Mentor:

- Provide support and assistance, including weekly check-in phone calls to the Parent Peer Educators (PPE's) you are working with to help keep the enthusiasm high and the lines of communication open between the PPE's and ACAP.
- Provide ongoing assistance with the preparation and coordination of the workshops. The PPE's will be responsible for the planning, recruitment and facilitation of each workshop, however, your role will be to provide assistance and advice in the following areas:
 1. Community Outreach: The site for the workshop needs to allow for a safe, comfortable and quiet environment for discussion.
 2. Logistics: Reinforce the PPE's need to plan for 2-3 hours of uninterrupted time for an effective workshop.
 3. Parent recruitment: The PPE's must have a minimum of six parents to participate for an effective workshop and to receive their stipend, and should not have more than 15 participants. Parents must be residents of the City of Alexandria.
- Meet with the PPE's for a prep session at least one week prior to their first workshop to do a practice run of the workshop and answer any questions to ensure consistent delivery of the workshop content and make sure they stay on mission.
- Attend, observe and evaluate at least their first workshop, as well as provide moral support.
- Provide the PPE's and ACAP with copies of the completed Parent Peer Educator Feedback Form.

Responsibilities of ACAP:

- ACAP will supervise and provide support to all Parent Mentors.

ACAP would like to thank the DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy for use of their materials and for their leadership and support.