

Let's Talk about tp

Leicestershire
Teenage Pregnancy
Newsletter

Issue 11

Teenage Pregnancy work 'must continue' says Independent Advisory Group

The Coalition government sees Teenage Pregnancy as a key issue, linked to its priorities of early intervention, reducing child poverty and health inequalities. That was the message to the Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group (TPIAG) Chair Gill Frances at a meeting with Sarah Teather, the new Minister for Children and Families¹.

Between 1998 and 2008, the conception rate for women aged 15 to 17 fell from 46.6 per thousand in 1998, to 40.5 per thousand in 2008. The government acknowledges that the situation has improved, as Sarah Teather pointed out recently in the House of Commons, with the under-18 conception rate being at its lowest level for over 20 years, however, she also recognised that England still has high Teenage Pregnancy rates compared with many other countries.

In light of budget cuts and the new political climate the TPIAG is concerned that scaling back contraceptive and sexual health services could reverse this progress and cost the country more in the long term. The TPIAG says there is robust evidence that prevention work around Teenage Pregnancy is good

value for money - each £1 invested in contraception is estimated to save the NHS £11. Reducing unplanned teenage pregnancy means less money is spent on abortion and maternity care, supporting vulnerable teenage parents into education, employment and training, and payments of income support, housing and child benefit.

Leicestershire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership has worked to reduce unplanned conceptions in under 18s and has seen a reduction of 12.9% since 1998, to a rate of 33.1 per 1000. Over 90% of young people interviewed as part of a local study gave positive reports about the SRE they had received². One young person said: *"I think it's more important than geography or history, not everyone will travel the world... but everyone will encounter love and relationships"*.

Good quality Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), easy access to effective contraception, and early intervention for young people most at risk, are all key to successful teenage pregnancy strategies according to guidance from the TPIAG.

The importance of SRE in reducing Teenage Pregnancy was further

underlined in recent research by the Department for Education showing that as many as 12% of nearly 15,000 young respondents were using emergency contraception as their regular contraceptive method³. The report concluded that effective SRE was the best way to support young people to access preventive methods of contraception.

The importance of effective sexual health services was also reiterated by Sarah Teather, Minister for Children and Families, when she confirmed that the Coalition government are *"considering how best to ensure that sufficient accessible, young people-friendly contraceptive and sexual health services are available in each local area"*.

Leicestershire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership hopes to continue to build on progress achieved so far to help reduce child poverty and health inequalities.

¹ Teenage Pregnancy Independent Advisory Group (TPIAG) E-Bulletin, July 2010

² Coventry University, Understanding Young People's Behaviour, Attitudes, Perceptions, and Influences in Relation to Sex, Sexual Health and Teenage Pregnancy, March 2010

³ Department for Education (DfE), The Youth Cohort Study and Longitudinal Study of Young People in England: The Activities and Experiences of 18 year olds: England 2009

Awards ceremony celebrates the achievements of young parents in Leicestershire

Young parents from Leicester and Leicestershire and those who work with them came together to celebrate their achievements at a prestigious summer awards ceremony in Leicester.

Held at the Y Theatre on 16th June, the awards recognised and rewarded a range of achievements by young parents, youth workers and practitioners across both the city and county. The evening was organised as a joint initiative between the city and county Teenage Pregnancy Partnerships.

One of the young winners on the night was Sophie Hailes, aged 20 from Leicester. Sophie, a young parent, won the 'Progression into Higher Education' award in recognition of her hard work and determination. Sophie has recently been accepted into DeMontfort University on the Foundation Degree Working With Young People on the back of volunteering as a youth worker at the North West Community Forum.

Sophie has been described by her colleagues at the North West Community Forum as, *"a phenomenal young parent and an example to us all"*.

The event was organised by Vicki Smith, Teenage Pregnancy and Parents Co-ordinator for Connexions Leicester Shire. It supported local targets to engage 60% of young parents into education, training or employment opportunities by December 2010.

Vicki Smith said: *"There are so many fantastic and talented people in Leicester and Leicestershire and the awards were a great opportunity to celebrate their achievements. From young parents, to youth workers and learning providers, we saw some amazing people on the night, and I am delighted that they gained the recognition they deserve."*

For more information on local opportunities please visit: www.parentsunder20.co.uk or contact: vsmith@connexions-leics.org



Mark Parr, Managing Director of Talent4Life receiving the 'Organisation Award'



Sophie Hailes receiving her 'Progression to Higher Education Award'

'IT'S OK FOR YOUNG WOMEN TO CARRY CONDOMS'

Leicestershire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership has begun work with Gateway College and the Teenage Pregnancy FE Network to promote the message 'it's OK for young women to carry condoms'. This work was one of the key recommendations made by a recent study conducted with young people across Leicestershire⁵.

The Partnership are working with students and staff from the college to produce a short video that will be promoted to all Further Education Students across the City and County to encourage young women to carry condoms. A creative workshop session took place with students in October to inform the content of the video. Filming will take place at Gateway College and Liquid nightclub during November with the video due for completion early December. The film will be promoted online via the college websites and YouTube.

LOOK OUT FOR THE FORTHCOMING CHRISTMAS SAFER SEX AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The campaign will communicate messages around risk taking and sexual health, particularly where there is an increase in alcohol use. It will also provide information around access to services over the Christmas and New Year break.

For more information please contact Katie Phillips, Teenage Pregnancy Coordinator, on: 01530 513 820 or by email: katie.phillips@leics.gov.uk



Some of the students from Gateway College who will star in the video

⁵ Coventry University, Understanding Young People's Behaviour, Attitudes, Perceptions and Influences in Relation to Sex, Sexual Health and Teenage Pregnancy, March 2010

Raising awareness of confidentiality

A recent study undertaken by Coventry University with nearly 600 14-20 year olds in Leicestershire highlighted a lack of understanding about what a 'confidential service' means among young people in High and Upper schools⁴.

This confusion can be a barrier to young people accessing sexual health services, as they are worried their friends or family may find out.

To address this, Leicestershire Teenage Pregnancy Partnership has distributed awareness-raising posters to schools and sexual health services across the county explaining what a confidential service means. These posters reassure young people that they are able to speak to service professionals and they will not tell anyone including teachers, friends, doctors and family members.

It is hoped these posters will encourage more young people to access sexual health services in the county.

For more information or to order copies of the poster, please contact Katie Phillips, Teenage Pregnancy Coordinator, on: 01530 513 820 or by email: katie.phillips@leics.gov.uk

⁴ Coventry University, Understanding Young People's Behaviour, Attitudes, Perceptions and Influences in Relation to Sex, Sexual Health and Teenage Pregnancy, March 2010



TP TRAINING COURSES CONTINUE TO BE WELL RECEIVED

The September to December 2010 training calendar has proved to be very popular, especially the newer sessions including 'Something for the boys' which has actually been over subscribed.

This new session explores the particular issues which influence boys in terms of sexual activity and sexual health and the ways in which these issues may impact upon their access to services.

2011 TRAINING

Dates for 2011 training sessions will be available soon. Courses for the new year include:

- Safer Sex Awareness and Promoting Healthy Sexual Development (January)
- Red Box and Pregnancy Testing (February)
- Delay and LARC (March)

To find out more, contact Sophia Amjad, TP Clerk on: 01530 513 821 or by email: sophia.amjad@leics.gov.uk



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU...

If you have any news, events, service updates or examples of best practice that you'd like to feature in Let's Talk, please contact Amy at: amy@divacreative.com