

May is Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month



National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month (NTPPM) is an educational campaign designed to help communities recognize that the effects of unintended teen pregnancy and early childbearing are far-reaching. This is a time when we can come together to emphasize the importance of a strong partnership between the community and the family in helping adolescents develop responsible and healthy attitudes about sexuality and strengthen decision-making skills that lead to positive choices.

Talking with Kids about Tough Issues

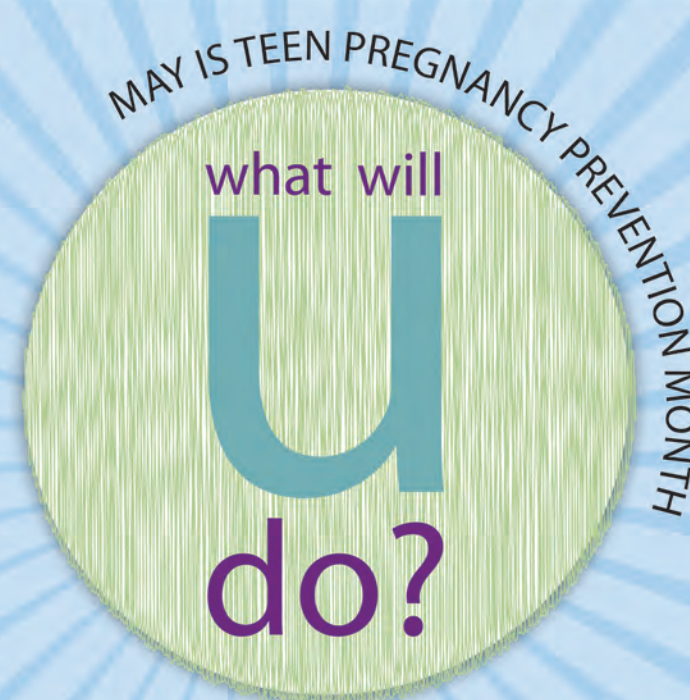
Studies show that kids who feel they can talk with their parents about sex - because their moms and dads speak openly and listen carefully to them - are less likely to engage in high-risk behavior as teens than kids who do not feel they can talk with their parents about the subject. So parents explore your feelings about sex. If you are very uncomfortable with the subject, read some books and discuss your feelings with a trusted friend, relative, physician or clergy member. The more you examine the subject, the more confident you'll feel discussing it.

Be clear about your views

This doesn't mean be judgmental. Teens want to and should know their family's values around sexual issues, alcohol use, dating, etc. **They should also know that their opinions and feelings are respected.**

GENERAL TIPS

- Answer questions as they come up and listen carefully to what is being asked.
- Anticipate your child's questions, then practice your responses ahead of time.
- If you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable, say so.
- Use specific and correct terminology.
- Be clear about your values.
- Talk about the joys of sexuality.
- Be concerned about telling "too little, too late" rather than "too much too soon."
- Beware of the "question behind the question."



Many parents would love to talk to their kids, but they just don't know where to begin. As the responsible **TEEN** in the family you may need to take the first step!

Here are a few tips:

- 1. TELL** them about **THINGS** that are happening in your life and take an interest in theirs.
- 2. SHARE** your **FEELINGS** with your parents whenever you can - let them get to know you.
- 3. ASK** your parents **QUESTIONS** about their personal opinions and values.
- 4. LISTEN** as well as **TALK**. If you listen to others - others are likely to listen to you.

Are you in a healthy relationship, or not?

HEALTHY

- We **LISTEN** and **TALK** to one another
- We **VALUE** each other's opinions
- We **SUPPORT** each other's goals
- We **RESPECT** each other's right to his/her own feelings, friends, activities and opinions
- We **TRUST** each other
- I **FEEL GOOD** about myself when I'm with my boyfriend/girlfriend
- I **LIKE** to spend time with my boyfriend/girlfriend
- We **ENCOURAGE** each other
- We have common **INTERESTS**
- We tell each other the **TRUTH**

NOT HEALTHY

- Your boyfriend/girlfriend **PUTS YOU DOWN**
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend **"CHECKS UP ON YOU"**
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend **CONTROLS** what you do, who you talk to and where you go
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend gets you your own cell phone so they can have **ACCESS** to you at all times
- You are **AFRAID** of your boyfriend/girlfriend
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend **SMASHES** your things
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend **MAKES YOU DO SOMETHING YOU DON'T WANT TO**
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend **HITS** you
- Your boyfriend/girlfriend **MAKES YOU FEEL GUILTY**

Find out more about teen pregnancy at the following websites:

• www.thenationalcampaign.org • www.moappp.org • www.kff.org • www.stayteen.org

Knox County Health Department
309-344-2224



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

1361 West Fremont Street
Galesburg, Illinois 61401
www.knoxcountyhealth.org