

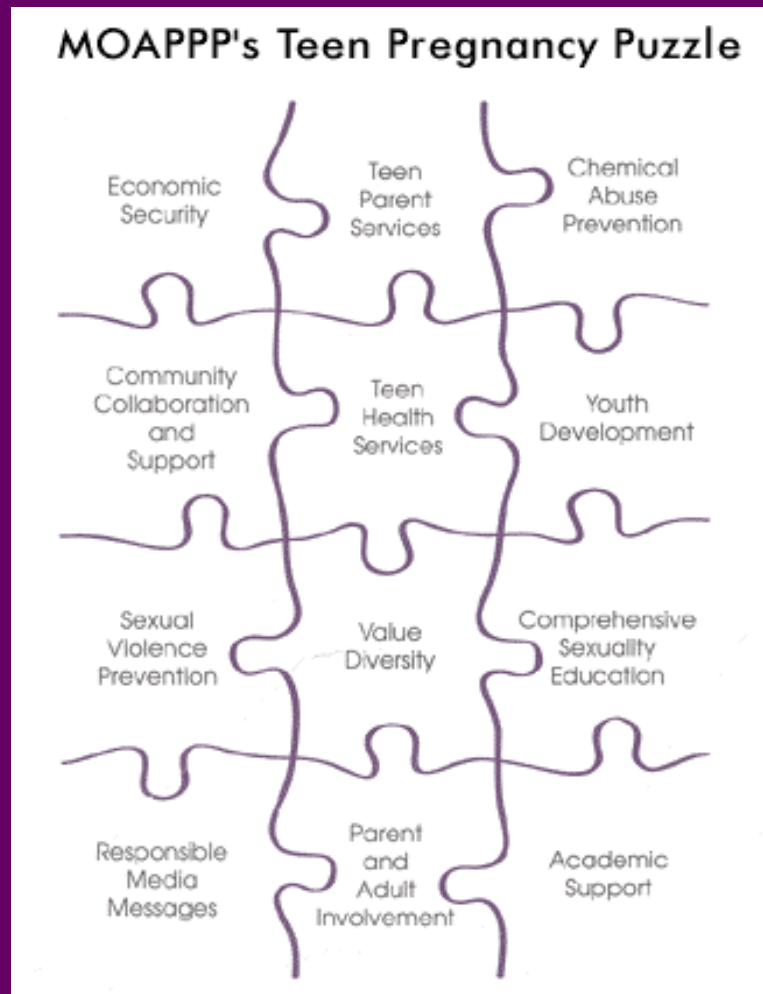
What can YOU do to prevent teen pregnancy?



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# Pieces of the puzzle that influence the prevention of teen pregnancy



## From the Hmong community interviews . . .

- 76% of parents and 59.6% of youth agree that parents have responsibility to teach teens about sexual health.
- 61.5% of parents would like to teach teens about sexual health

# The reality . . .

- 1 in 3 reported talks about sexuality
- 49.4% of parents and 47.3% of youth agreed that parents have knowledge to teach kids about sexual health
- 29.9% of youth agreed that “parents told me all I need to know about sex.”
- 33.2% of youth agreed that “parents told me all I need to know about relationships.”

What can we, as professionals, parents, caring adults, and teens, do to address teen pregnancy in the Hmong community?

# Three “pieces of the puzzle” to address teen pregnancy

- Parent and Adult Involvement
- Comprehensive Sexuality Education
- Teen Health Services

# Parent and Adult Involvement

- Encouraging and supporting parents and other caring adults to be the primary educators for teens on sexuality and healthy relationships.

## Research shows . . .

- Children and teen want to talk to their parents and caregivers about sexuality.<sup>1</sup>
- Children and teens who clearly understand their family's values concerning sexuality and relationships are more likely to avoid risk-taking behaviors.<sup>2</sup>
- Youth who feel connected to their family are more likely to avoid risk-taking behaviors.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, 2002

<sup>2</sup> Kirby, 2001

<sup>3</sup> Miller, 1998



# October is Let's Talk Month!



Let's Talk Month is a time to promote parent-child dialogue about healthy sexuality and relationships.



[www.moappp.org](http://www.moappp.org)

Resources and tips available for parents and young people to facilitate dialogue on healthy sexuality and relationships.



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## Ten Tips on Raising a Sexually Healthy Child

- 1. Let your child know they can trust you and come to you even when they make mistakes.**
- 2. Know your children's friends and their families. Friends have a strong influence on each other.**
- 3. Answer questions honestly! Tell your child what they want to know using words they can understand.**
- 4. Be patient. The same question may be asked again and again.**
- 5. Start conversations and be a good listener. Regularly make time to spend together.**
- 6. Do not use myths and fables. Don't talk about animals and plants when children want to talk about people.**
- 7. Inform your child about sexual assault in the same manner you would warn them about other dangers.**
- 8. Help your child learn how to make good decisions and how to stand by them.**
- 9. Know what your children are watching, reading, and listening to. Current media images are full of negative messages.**
- 10. Share and model desirable sexual values, attitudes, and behaviors. Your examples are the most powerful messages you can provide**



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## Talking to my parents? How do I start?

Here are a few tips to help:

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



[www.moappp.org](http://www.moappp.org)

For professionals:

- Research
- Display ideas
- Sample agendas and activities for adult or teen meetings
- Media templates
- Resources and fact sheets

# Three “pieces of the puzzle” to address teen pregnancy

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# Comprehensive Sexuality Education

- Age-appropriate sexuality education that starts in kindergarten and continues through twelfth grade.
- Provides factual information on a wide range of topics related to sexuality and provides opportunities for developing skills.
- Topics include abstinence, information on values, relationships, decision-making, refusal skills, puberty, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections.

# Research shows . . .

- Providing comprehensive information to young people can help to delay sexual activity and lead to greater use of contraceptives among those who choose to be sexually active.<sup>1</sup>
- Abstinence-only-until-marriage programs have not proven to be effective: the only research has found an increased number of young people having sex and that few used contraceptives.<sup>2</sup>
- 9 out of 10 Minnesotans support comprehensive sexuality education in high schools and 8 out of 10 Minnesotans support comprehensive sexuality education in junior high schools.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kirby, 1994

<sup>2</sup> Kirby et al., 1995

<sup>3</sup> Minnesota Sexuality Education Survey, 2000



In contrast . . .

## **Abstinence-only-until-marriage Education**

- Does not include any information on contraception or prevention of sexually transmitted infections.
- Relies on scare tactics and overstates contraception failure rates.
- Does not provide young people with information they will need for healthy lives.

# Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Why is this an issue?

# To prevent teen pregnancy we must support comprehensive sexuality education.

- Talk to school administrators--what type of sexuality education is taught in your local school?
- Talk with school board members--let them know you want comprehensive sexuality education in your schools.
- Call, email, meet with your state representative and senator--tell them you want Minnesota youth to receive accurate and truthful sexuality education.

# Three “pieces of the puzzle” to address teen pregnancy

- Parent and Adult Involvement
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# Teen Health Services

- Teens need access to confidential, comprehensive and affordable health services.

# Minors' Consent Law

- Assures teens confidential health services for:
  - Emergency care
  - Contraceptives
  - Pregnancy-related care
  - Sexually transmitted infections
  - Inpatient mental health
  - Treatment for drug and alcohol abuse
- Allows health care professionals to inform parents or guardians in situations in which failure to inform them would jeopardize the health of the minor.

# Research shows . . .

- Mandatory parental notification reduces likelihood that teens will seek timely treatment.<sup>1</sup>
- A study of suburban teens found that only 45% of teens would seek care related to depression and less than 20% would seek care related to contraceptives, sexually transmitted infections or drug abuse if parental notification was required.<sup>1</sup>
- 80% of unmarried adolescent females would not seek birth control if parental notification were required, but fewer than 1% would discontinue sexual relations.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Council of Scientific Affairs, American Medical Association, 1993

<sup>2</sup> Reddy, 2002

# Minors' Consent and Confidential Teen Health Services

Why is this an issue?



# To prevent teen pregnancy we must have confidential teen health services.

- Parents and other caregivers need to encourage young people to communicate with them.
- Some young people cannot talk to their parents because of abuse, refusal by the parent to discuss these issues or the young person does not live with the parent.
- Health care professionals and people who work with young people need to understand the minors' consent law and provide this information to young people.
- Young people need to understand their rights to confidential health care.
- Call, email, meet with your state representative and senator--tell them you support confidential health care for Minnesota youth.

# How do we support young people to have healthy lives?

- Parent and Adult Involvement
- Comprehensive Sexuality Education
- Teen Health Services

# What can YOU do to prevent teen pregnancy?



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