

Project Narrative

The mission of Women's Health Center-Thomason Hospital is to enhance the health and wellness of the El Paso community by making high quality, affordable health care and education services available to all to improve the quality of life. Our mission is to bring a message of responsible decision-making, positive peer power, and effective communication to the teens of the El Paso area, while enhancing our focus on women's issues and concerns of their families. The community education program will do this by implementing "Girls Night Out, Mother-Daughter Workshops", that will encourage communication between girls and their mothers.

The need to enhance the communication between mothers and daughters has become imperative because of the information we are receiving about young people. According to the Texas Department of Health, their most recent statistics indicate that in 2000, the United States birth rate for teens 15-17 years was 27.4 per thousand; the Texas Teen Pregnancy rate in that same period of time was 33.1 per thousand. Texas was the fourth highest among all the states in the nation in teen birth rate for ages 15 to 17 in 2000. According to the El Paso Times, "El Paso is among worst of 50 largest cities" in teen pregnancy.

We know that the vast majority of young people begin sexual relations during the ages of thirteen to nineteen years of age. According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute at age 15, 75% of teens are still virgins, at age 17, 50% are virgins and by age 20 almost 80% of young people have become sexually active. New studies show that adolescent people along the U.S.-Mexican border are at higher risk of infection with HIV/AIDS due to increased migration, culture, and drug abuse. According to the Bureau of Health Statistics, by June 2003, the cases of AIDS in El Paso were at 1,334 and an additional 1,064 persons have tested positive for HIV infection.

To send our young daughters into the world without important information that will assist them in making good decisions about their sexuality is inconceivable. Women are being encouraged to open up the communication regarding sexuality with their young daughters. "Girls Night Out" will give mothers the opportunity to participate in programs that encourage healthy communication between them and their daughters about topics that have previously been taboo. We intend to demonstrate the value of effective communication between young women and their mothers. The goal of this program is to strengthen and disseminate knowledge of women's health issues in this region and to improve communication between young girls and their mothers.

Women's Health Center/Thomason Hospital "Girls Night Out"-Fidelia Onsurez

Middle school girls will have the opportunity to learn the costs (financial, social and physical) of becoming sexually active at a young age. Mothers who participate in the program will have the opportunity to learn along with their daughters about sexually transmitted infections, the importance of openly discussing sexuality issues and identifying ones own values regarding these issues. They will have the opportunity to help to increase their daughter's self-esteem by showing them how valued they are.

Three area middle schools will be targeted to participate in the "Girls Night Out, Mother-Daughter Workshops". These schools are East Montana Middle School and Clark Middle School in El Paso, Texas and Gadsden Middle School located in Anthony, New Mexico. The girls will be invited and referred to the program by the middle school staff. We will provide a series of presentations to fifteen girls and their mothers once a month for three months. The topics to be addressed are: How to talk to your Mom/Daughter about Sexuality, Values Clarification and Self-Esteem, and Sexually Transmitted Infections including HIV/AIDS. Each session will last two hours and will consist of interactive and fun activities that will serve to improve communication between girls and their mothers. Monies will be used for educational materials, refreshments for the girls and their mothers and incentives such as water bottles, pencils, etc...

Participants will be able to:

Objective # 1 Participate in three educational sessions over the span of three months

Objective #2 identify at least two reasons to postpone sexual involvement

Objective #3 to list at least three sexually transmitted diseases and identify those that are caused by a virus and therefore are incurable

Objective #4 identify two reasons for attending college

The evaluation of the program will be done as a two-part process, formative and summative.

The formative plan utilizes evaluation results that are conducted at the conclusion of each training session. The evaluations allow us to make adjustments prior to the next planned training. After the training period has ended, an impact evaluation will be conducted to determine if the participants are utilizing what they learned in a positive manner. The participants will be assessed about their attitudes and behaviors regarding sexuality. With the premise being that if the participants remember the knowledge, it will affect their attitudes and hopefully will impact their behaviors. Enhanced communication between mothers and their teenaged daughters, will result in reducing the risk of unwanted teen pregnancies and a decrease in the risk of these young women becoming infected with sexually transmitted infections.