

GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT EDUCATING TEENS

As if it weren't clear enough already, the evidence continues to mount that it's time for us to get serious about responsibly educating our teens about sex.

In the last issue of *FLASH*, we discussed some disturbing news about teen pregnancy; it appears to be on the rise after years of decline. Since then, we've learned from the Centers for Disease Control that 1 in 4 teen girls are infected with a sexually transmitted disease (STD). Clearly, the federal government's strategy of pumping millions of dollars into abstinence-only programs is not working.

At the risk of repeating myself, I'll say it again: Most adults share the goal of reducing early sexual activity among teens. The tragedy is that many policy-makers will not accept the fact that the best way to achieve abstinence among teens is to implement programs that are comprehensive in nature—that is, programs that teach about postponing sex and about safer sex practices.

But there's hope! As adults continue to argue at the policy level, some very savvy teens are actually doing something to change the situation. In Knoxville, PPMET just graduated the first peer educators in our FYI program. As you can read in a separate article in this issue, these young leaders have reached more than 800 of their peers with realistic, responsible information about sexuality.

Last year, you read about some of our PG-13 Players in Nashville creating a spin-off advocacy group called STI (Spread The Information). Over the past few months, these plucky teens have collected more than 500 signatures on a petition calling for comprehensive sex education in our schools and communities.

So the pattern continues: bad news and good news. Our gratitude and admiration go out to our peer educators, who are the good news!

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FROM THE CEO

One of the most worthwhile and exciting things we do at PPMET is serve as training sites for future healthcare professionals and health educators. Partnering with local colleges and universities across Tennessee, we are able to provide hands-on experience for nursing and medical students who are the next generation of providers dedicated to protecting women's health.



Jeff Teague
President and CEO

For several years, PPMET has hosted students from the Colleges of Nursing at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and Vanderbilt University. We have also hosted students from the University of Missouri. The purpose of these programs is to provide practical experience to students in undergraduate and graduate programs in the delivery of reproductive and sexual healthcare and abortion care. Typically, the time the students spend varies anywhere from two to four months depending on the number of hours of clinical experience required for their program. Students learn how to do annual gynecological exams, pap smears, ultrasound, prescribe medications and abortion care.

We are proud of our relationship with Medical Students for Choice (MSFC) at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. For several years now, PPMET has been a major sponsor of the chapter of MSFC, providing financial support and speakers for their monthly meetings. In addition, PPMET is listed with MSFC nationally as an externship site. As an externship site, we host medical students interested in receiving training in abortion care. Recently, a resident from Brown University Medical Center spent the month of January receiving training in abortion care.

Probably our most exciting partnerships are with Vanderbilt University Medical Center and Meharry Medical College in which we host Residency Training programs. Under the programs, PPMET hosts all OB/GYN residents for each facility for a total of two weeks. During that time, residents spend one week working in our family planning program, providing exams and prescribing medications. They also spend a week in our abortion program receiving training. These training opportunities are critical given that so few medical students receive any education or training in reproductive healthcare, including abortion care.

PPMET also regularly provides internship opportunities for students from the University of Tennessee School of Social Work and Vanderbilt Divinity School. These students work with our Education Department to get practical experience in comprehensive sexuality education and working with youth.

Having students regularly rotating through our facilities provides the additional benefit of exposing these future healthcare providers and educators to the values that inform the mission of Planned Parenthood. Of course, the greatest benefit is that we are often able to employ some of these students after they complete their coursework. Recently, we hired a Nurse Practitioner shortly after she graduated from Vanderbilt School of Nursing to work in the Nashville Health Center. And, probably our most successful intern is Mark Huffman, Vice President of Organizational Development, Education and Training, who came to Planned Parenthood as an intern from the Vanderbilt Divinity School, was hired after he graduated and has been providing outstanding leadership in sexuality education at Planned Parenthood for the past TWENTY years!

I hope you are as proud of these programs as we are. We understand how valuable the experience is for the students and how beneficial it is for us.



Nashville Health Center
412 D.B. Todd Blvd.
Nashville, TN 37203
phone: 615.321.7216
fax: 615.320.5233

Knoxville Health Center
8078 Kingston Pike, Ste. 153
Knoxville, TN 37919
phone: 865.694.7155
fax: 865.694.7154

Education & Training Services
Knoxville Area 865.694.7155 x.3
Nashville Area 615.345.0952

Administrative Office
50 Vantage Way, Ste. 102
Nashville, TN 37228
phone: 615.345.0952
fax: 615.345.0958

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2008 GALA IN THE GARDEN IS A SMASHING SUCCESS !

Over 250 supporters joined PPMET at the 8th Annual Gala in the Garden on May 8, 2008, held once again at Nashville's Cheekwood Botanical Garden and Museum of Art. Guests enjoyed a cocktail reception, silent centerpiece auction, and catering by Anne Clayton. This year's Keynote Speaker, Planned Parenthood Federation of America President **Cecile Richards**, spoke eloquently about the ongoing fight for reproductive freedom and the need for continued, outspoken support for choice in Tennessee and across the nation. Cecile got the crowd excited and had them on their feet! Jeff Teague, President and CEO of PPMET, shared all our successes through the past year, and what can be anticipated in the year ahead.

As part of Gala in the Garden, PPMET was also proud to present the 2008 Family Life Educator of the Year Award (FLE). More on the FLE winners is in the article below.

PPMET would like to extend a special thanks to our table hosts,



PPFA President Cecile Richards (3rd from Right) and 2008 FLE Winners.

patrons, and sponsors, and especially to our Gala Host Committee: **John Auston Bridges, Iris and Mike Buhl, St. Clair and Hank Foster, Sherry and Everett Howell, Clay Isaacs, and Heather Marabeti.**

Gala was a great success this year. We hope you will join us for Gala 2009!

PPMET ANNOUNCES 2008 FAMILY LIFE EDUCATOR AWARDS

At Gala in the Garden on Thursday, May 8th, PPMET recognized some very special colleagues in middle Tennessee. University School of Nashville counselor and teacher **Anita Schmid** and the Education Department of Nashville CARES were named the 2008 Family Life Educators (FLE) of the Year.

The Family Life Educator Award, established in 1992, recognizes educators who offer family life and human sexuality education in an exemplary manner. Criteria for selection include creative use of a variety of resources and an emphasis on the values of responsibility, respect, and healthy decision-making. The 2008 honorees received cash awards, a certificate of achievement, and their names were added to a plaque commemorating previous winners.

During her tenure at University School of Nashville (USN), Anita Schmid has engaged students and parents through diverse and creative programming. Regarding her philosophy as an educator, Schmid writes, "Meeting students where they are and giving them food for thought in critical areas communicates a respect for teens that helps them build respect for themselves and for each other." As coordinator of USN's Peer Educator Assistants and Student Advisory Council, Ms. Schmid has successfully integrated the topic of sexuality into student-driven discussions that empower young people with the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthier life decisions. Ms. Schmid uses innovative, interactive teaching methods to maintain a non-judgmental learning environment where students feel comfortable discussing the sensitive issues of sexuality. Reflecting upon her experience as a Peer Educator Assistant, one USN student writes, "Ms. Schmid taught us how to guide a person to make their own decisions instead of telling a person how to make a decision. In order to guide someone, Ms. Schmid taught me that one must know how to listen and be extraordinarily empathetic."

Since its inception in 1985, Nashville CARES has provided direct services, counseling, and education to thousands of clients affected by HIV/AIDS throughout Middle Tennessee. Today, the Nashville CARES Education Department reaches 35,000 adults and youth each year to raise awareness about AIDS, help reduce the risk of new HIV infections, and help people face the emotional, social, and psychological challenges of living with HIV/AIDS. Through its award-winning outreach, prevention, and support programs, Nashville CARES education offers "a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention, supporting decisions by

young people to delay sexual behavior and giving sexually active individuals the skills to change risky behavior." By integrating topics such as healthy relationships, sexual decision making, and reproductive anatomy into their workshops, outreach, and counseling efforts, CARES educators posit HIV management and prevention as a holistic part of maintaining healthy sexuality. Nashville CARES Education staff includes Kevin Lawson, Dwayne Jenkins, Tiffinea Jones, DaShawn Usher, Anthony Atkins, Leslie Whiting, Tana Terry, Sarah Sheldon, Tim Daniels, Ken Barton, Claude Genzel, Allen Pinedo, and Patrick Luther. PPMET commends these educators for their outstanding efforts to teach responsible sexuality education in a creative and sensitive manner.

LIVE ACTION CAMP!

For 25 college-aged Tennesseans, April 5-6 was the weekend to come together in Memphis to learn how to be Planned Parenthood activists at the PPMET and PP Greater Memphis Region Live Action Camp (LAC)!

They learned how to get media attention, be interviewed, organize in the face of radical anti-choice organizations like the Genocide Awareness Project, hold and participate in a phone bank, organize a Burma Shave, answer FAQs about birth control and Emergency Contraception, put together a table for membership recruitment for their Vox® chapter, and be successful fundraisers.

Student participation was up 22% over last year's LAC with students representing UT Knoxville, MTSU, Vanderbilt, University of Memphis, Rhodes, and Ole Miss. LAC attendees reported that the Camp helps them understand and connect with the mission of Planned Parenthood in addition to meeting and networking with other pro-choice students from around the state. Each year we host a LAC, we learn more, grow bigger, and reach more young Tennesseans! Look for more information on LAC 2009 — it'll be held in Knoxville and hopefully be bigger and better than ever!



Live Action Camp participants in the classroom and on the street!



PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT CELEBRATES FYI'S FIRST YEAR

For Your Information (FYI), Knoxville's new peer education program, celebrated the end of their first year with a photo exhibition on April 24th at the Three Flights Up gallery in downtown Knoxville. Titled "Framing Choice: What Choice Means to Me," the event featured photographs taken by the eight FYI educators to depict what choice means in their lives. From the choice to express themselves by what they wear; to choose to express their love regardless of race, class, or gender; or to choose to live on the edge, the FYI teens' photographs portrayed a very broad definition of choice.



2008 FYI Educators, clockwise from the top, Catherine, Conrad, Brittny, Amber, Olivia, Chuck, Britney & Vanessa.

Knoxville supporters joined the teens at the gallery to celebrate FYI and for some, to purchase the teens' artwork. Attendees had the opportunity to hear directly from the teens. Here are some excerpts from the teens' address:

"What is choice? What does it mean to choose, and to be a teenager? Choice is defined as, "The power, right, or liberty to choose; option." However, when, as young people, does this apply to us? How are we supposed to grow up, when we cannot embrace choice? We as youth need power to make our choices. We as youth have the right to choose. We as youth are not given the liberty of options."

"We as FYI Peer Educators of Planned Parenthood of Middle and East Tennessee have been learning a lot about what choice is. From different types of birth control to different types of relationships to everything else that youth face we have learned our options, and how to make the right decisions for our lives."

"FYI creates role models and educators out of teenagers. It promotes self confidence and self respect. Obviously, this program is great. On top of everything, it's really fun and interactive. The folks at Planned Parenthood have really made a fabulous way to educate."

The 2008 FYI teens participated in the first year of Knoxville's peer education program, accomplishing 853 educational contacts, 48 hours of training per teen, and 201 signatures on a comprehensive sex ed petition.

This is only the beginning of FYI! Recruitment for Spring 2009 FYI teens will begin this fall. For more information, please contact Ginny at 865.694.7155 x 3 or ginnyw@ppmet.org.



FYI educators Brittny, Olivia and Chuck at the FYI photo exhibition.

HIV VACCINE AWARENESS DAY

On Sunday, May 17th, PPMET sponsored a Community Fish Fry and Health Fair in honor of HIV Vaccine Awareness Day at our Nashville Health Center. PPMET partnered with various community organizations to couple a preventive HIV vaccine message with complimentary preventative health services and information.

East Side Fish served "The Crunkiest Fish" while 101 The Beat Jamz WUBT-FM advertised the event and provided entertainment. Nearly 300 participants attended the health fair and received information from 17 partner organizations including Nashville CARES, Street Works, March of Dimes, and the Meharry Sister Program

"A comprehensive approach to controlling the AIDS pandemic includes prevention strategies, care and treatment improvements and HIV vaccine research," said Kat Davis, Community Educator with the HIV Vaccine Unit at Vanderbilt University. "Public understanding and support is essential in efforts to break down stigma and myths about HIV vaccine research. For example, many people may not realize that HIV vaccines do not contain the HIV virus, and therefore, cannot cause HIV infection."

Planned Parenthood would like to thank the champions behind HIV Vaccine science - the thousands of study volunteers, scientists and health professionals who bring needed hope to the fight against HIV/AIDS through their commitment to finding a safe and effective preventive HIV vaccine. All Americans — especially at-risk populations such as communities of color and those who are sexually active — need to learn more about HIV vaccine research and be a part of making an HIV vaccine a reality.

Want more information about preventive HIV vaccine trials or HIV prevention? Please visit ppmet.org or betheneration.org.



Community members at the at the Fish Fry and Health Fair.

HOW WILL YOU SPEND YOUR "ECONOMIC STIMULUS CHECK" THIS MONTH?

Times are tough for all of us, so we understand that you might be having trouble deciding what to do with your economic stimulus check. We think of paying taxes as an investment in our country, enabling our fellow citizens to benefit from programs and services that make our lives better. Healthy citizens are better for the economy. Please consider reinvesting your rebate in your community — for those who are uninsured and can't afford health insurance, for those who have to choose between buying groceries and seeking medical care. Your donation to PPMET will help keep our fellow Tennesseans healthy. Please use the enclosed envelope to make a donation today!