

PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S ADULT ROLE MODELS PROGRAM

Connecting to Community

One of Planned Parenthood of New York City's most important goals is to engage parents in the effort to help their children develop sexually healthy lives. At Planned Parenthood we know that parents and caregivers are the main sexuality educators of their children. To grow into sexually healthy adults, young people need skills and information to help them delay sexual activity and to protect themselves when they do become sexually active. To increase family communication about sexuality, Planned Parenthood created the Adult Role Models (ARM) program in 1997.

The Adult Role Models program trains local parents to become peer educators in their community. After going through an intensive three-month training, the Adult Role Models learn to facilitate workshops designed to give parents and other caretakers a greater understanding of the importance of discussing sex and sexuality with their children. Research shows that when parents and children communicate openly about sexuality, children delay the onset of sexual activity and use birth control more effectively when they do become sexually active. Unfortunately, often parents feel uncomfortable starting a conversation about sex with their teenagers—the Adult Role Models of Planned Parenthood help to reduce the common anxiety that parents feel by giving them information and skills.

The Adult Role Models offer interactive workshops that are fun and free of charge. Adult Role Models conduct workshops for fellow parents wherever they find them—in faith-based organizations, GED programs, community organizations, and schools. Workshops topics include: **“Talking to your children about the facts of life;”** **“Opening the lines of communication;”** **“Child development and sexuality;”** and **“It takes more than talk.”** In these workshops, parents learn how to start the conversation and have some everyday ways they can monitor their children and reduce the chances of the unintended consequences of adolescent sexuality.

To schedule a free Adult Role Models workshop in English or Spanish, please call: 212.274.7362 for Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Bronx workshops

For more information on the Adult Role Models program and other community-based programs, please visit our website at:

<http://www.ppnyc.org/services/community.html>



Getting to Know Elizabeth Butler, a Planned Parenthood Adult Role Model:

Why did you get involved with the Adult Role Models program?

“About three years ago, I was actually a participant in a workshop, and after the workshop I just wanted to know what I had to do to become one. The person who was facilitating told me that they were actually looking for new Adult Role Models, and the search was ending the next day—so I called, and interviewed, and that’s all there was to it.”

What is the most rewarding part of this program?

“To me, what’s most rewarding is to see the change in the parents. The ones who come in saying “No, I can’t say that,” who, by the end of the first workshop are willing to try something new, and can’t wait for the next workshop.”

What is the one thing you hope parents leave a workshop knowing?

“I hope they leave knowing that they can talk to their children about anything, if they work at it.”

What advice would you give to people who want to get more involved in their community?

“I would say try to attend a workshop, and find out what types of things are going on in their community that focus on teens and their parents. And if they don’t find any events, they should get something started.”