



# FOCUS

## ON PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest

Fall 2009

## HPV Update

### It's been three years

since the FDA approved, and then recommended, the HPV vaccine.

Marketed with the name Gardasil, the vaccine prevents 70% of the human papillomavirus (HPV) strains that cause cervical cancer. Eighty percent of American women will contract some strain of HPV by the time they reach 50 years old. HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the country. Annually, 11,000 American women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and about 3,700 will die of the disease.

The greatest outcome would be to one day see a generation that's free of cervical cancer. Developing and approving Gardasil goes a long way toward achieving that goal, but it will be many years before we see HPV rates go down, even if the rosier predictions come true. Our job right now as reproductive healthcare providers is to make sure everyone who wants the HPV vaccine can get it.

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## Family Programs

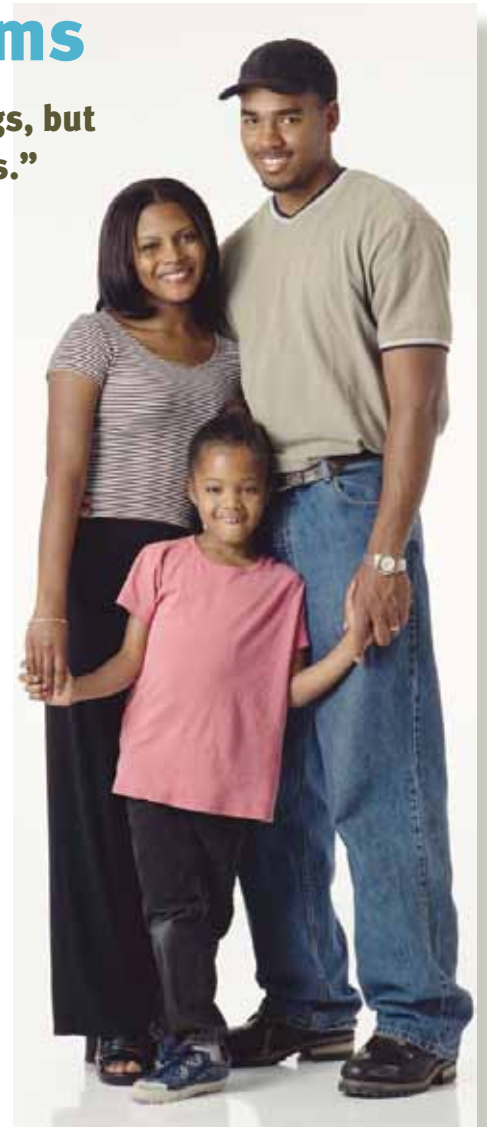
### "We're experts on some things, but you're the expert on your kids."

The words come from Carole Miller, Vice President of Education and Training for Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest. She's talking about the main philosophy behind a new campaign that will help define PPGNW's educational efforts in Alaska, Idaho, and western Washington for the year 2010. The affiliate has committed to setting up a series of volunteer and staff-run workshops that specialize in helping parents talk to their kids about sex. These family programs will be for parents with kids of all ages, with the overarching belief that parents know what's best for their children, but sometimes need concrete tips and strategies for starting any conversation about sex.

"A lot of parenting messages are fairly clear" says Miller, "like 'brush your teeth' and 'eat your vegetables' and 'look both ways before you cross' but when we start talking about sex, it's a lot about values. And what's important here is that parents bring their values to the discussion. There are no right answers. The key is to start talking...and keep it up."

Miller says the workshops can be transformative. She relates how families coming to the popular Growing up Female and Growing up Male workshops often show up looking anxious, quiet, and with fidgety kids. But the same families leave arm-in-arm, laughing, and appearing much closer. The volunteers who lead the workshops are more facilitators than teachers, and the main attributes they want to impart to parents are confidence and competence.

Family programs have been offered in western Washington for many years, and include sessions for families together, as well as ones for parents only. Carole



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## From the Board Chair

**I write this note to you** as we are wrapping up a four day conference for the Planned Parenthood Western Region that began October 7<sup>th</sup>. This conference, hosted by your own Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest, brought together volunteer board members and affiliate presidents from all over the nation, and staff from the Federation. It was a chance to reflect on the work we have ahead, and inventory the resources we have to meet those challenges.

I walked away from the conference struck by the deep and committed talent we have: An Executive Team intensely strengthened by the combination of new perspectives and skills brought together from Alaska, Idaho and Washington. And the energy in our new board is amazing, with an age span from a member recently of our Young Professionals group to a member who served a few decades ago, experiences from Alaska's North Slope to the fields of Idaho, and backgrounds as diverse as it gets. These varied perspectives seem to have picked up the pace of ideas and have made for a productive, action-based volunteer group.

But it's the staff that makes it happen. Across our three states, I've met incredible people making it happen every day. Clinicians, educators, assistants and security professionals who work with the increased leverage our combined affiliate brings, but who are really successful because of their uncommon passion, smart and innovative approach, and impressive abilities.

It's not easy now, and there are certainly funding, political, and operational challenges we need your help with. But, it's a moment that I for one, will mark with deep pride.

You should too.

*Han Nachtrieb*

## Executive Update



## Positive Steps in a Negative Economy

**I look forward to the day** when I'm not always thinking about the economy and asking the people I work with to cut their budgets and stretch their resources. But today's not that day.

The good news is we have people at PPGNW who come to work with their brains engaged and their creativity on high output. Together we have come up with ideas to pursue more revenue and increase efficiency while maintaining our high standard of patient care. I thought I'd share some of the highlights of that strategy with you.

- **Affiliate-wide customer service training.** We've always prided ourselves on giving good customer service, but this is an area where excellence equals money. In September, everyone who works for PPGNW received customer service training, including management. We know that some patients have choices in their reproductive health needs, and if they don't, we want to show them the same respect they would get if they did. By upping the level of our customer service, we will attract and keep more patients, or more patients getting the service they need.
- **Qualifying more patients for Take Charge.** In the state of Washington, *Take Charge* is a wonderful program that matches state and federal dollars to assist low income patients in the cost of family planning. We are currently running an aggressive media campaign that informs potential patients they may qualify for *Take Charge*. This will mean more patients will have their reproductive



health care costs covered, and fewer patients who come to us for services they can't afford.

- **Expanding Take Charge eligibility.** We are currently working with people at the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) on the possibility of expanding eligibility for the *Take Charge* program. This would mean more people would qualify for this cost-effective program and become patients.
- **Pharmacy project.** This will effectively turn our health centers into in-network pharmacies. It will require additional training of our medical staff, but then patients with private insurance would be able to get their family planning prescriptions from us at the time of their visit instead of going to a commercial pharmacy. We hope to have this project up and running by the end of the year.

It's important for me to share with you the proactive things we're doing to lessen the impact of this economic downturn. The ideas outlined above are the result of many people at PPGNW thinking creatively and working diligently. But even if all these projects succeed, we still can't do what we do without you. Your support in these tough times is more than appreciated, it's necessary. Thank you in advance for anything you can do to help us continue in our mission.

*Christine R. Charbonneau*

*Christine R. Charbonneau,  
President/CEO*

## Court and Legislative Update

# Health Care Reform Rolls On – Keep the Calls Flowing Into Congressional Offices

**On October 12, 2009, the Senate Finance Committee** voted their bipartisan version of health care reform out of committee. This was the fifth and final committee to weigh in on health care reform. Each chamber of Congress will now meld together their different versions of health care reform to create one bill from each chamber. And, after much anticipated and continued debate, these measures will be voted on by each House. Upon final passage, these bills will go to conference with the goal of getting one piece of legislation to President Obama by year's end.

Healthcare reform is moving quickly. It is critically important that we who support Planned Parenthood continue calling our Senators and Representative to urge these three main points: First, women's health care and reproductive health care must be included in health care reform. Second, women and men seeking reproductive health care must be able to go to their chosen pro-

## Alaska

Since Sarah Palin and friends announced they were submitting a Parental notice/consent initiative in Alaska, PPGNW has been very busy. Laws like this, while doing nothing to encourage or enhance parent/teen communication, put the safety and health of teens at risk. In states where these laws are on the books, it's clear that teens delay critical medical care, travel out of state or across borders, take matters into their own homes—and some even consider suicide.

And with their convoluted judicial bypass provisions and government mandates, laws like this put government bureaucracies and courts right in the middle of families. We certainly don't need more government mandates in our lives.

PPGNW and our colleagues in Alaska headed by Clover Simon are determined to defeat this and have spent the summer and fall gearing up. We've done polling and research, we've filed a lawsuit to keep this off the ballot (still pending) we've begun to build a coalition, brief legislators, reach out to the press, and begun to raise money. We've been busy and we will need

everyone's help as we move into the spring and summer. We'll keep you all posted – because together we will beat this.

## Idaho

It's hard to believe that in just a few weeks time we made the abrupt transition from swimsuits to sweaters. For the PPGNW Public Affairs team in Idaho, that means saying goodbye to outreach at summer festivals and hello to legislative strategy meetings in steamy coffee shops. But we can't let the summer of 2009 pass by without recognizing the great work done by our volunteers and organizers over the past few months.

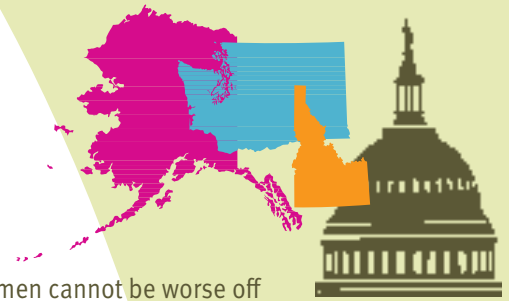
From June 20<sup>th</sup> to September 20<sup>th</sup>, our Idaho Public Affairs team spent a full twenty days in the field participating in high-visibility community events. This included some great opportunities to collaborate with our friends and allies; marching at Take Back the Night, tabling at Boise Pride, sitting in a dunk tank at Know Your Status, and belly dancing at the Goddess Fest.

During this time period, we registered nearly 600 new PPAN members, a 30% increase in our total PPGNW-Idaho mem-

vider and, third, women cannot be worse off after health care reform than they were before.

Please call the Capitol Hotline to leave a message for your Senators and your member of Congress. The number is 202-224-3121. Tell your Senators and Representative that you are a supporter of Planned Parenthood and that you want them to vote against any amendment that undermines women's access to comprehensive health care from the provider of their choice.

There have been a myriad of attempts to thwart women's health since the beginning of the health care debate. So far, Planned Parenthood has been successful at beating back harmful amendments which would restrict access to reproductive health, but we must remain vigilant until the end. During debate in the Senate, a number of Democratic women Senators including Sen. Patty Murray of Washington talked about improving access to quality preventive reproductive health care.



bership. Our volunteers did such a great job engaging these new folks that 35 of them have already attended a formal volunteer training and are now vocal supporters of PPGNW themselves. And they mean business...at the Western Idaho Fair alone, volunteers donated over 200 hours of their time in our booth.

Most importantly, this incredible summer has left us in a strong position as our focus moves heavily toward local and national policy. Let the advocacy begin!

## Washington

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest field organizers continue to be busy with Health Care Reform. Washington state-based Planned Parenthood organizers were responsible for getting close to 500 people out to the town hall meetings held throughout western Washington during August and early September. PP organizers have also generated over 10% of the calls for the national healthcare phone banks. Thanks to all of you who have helped in these efforts. We are making a difference! To get involved please call: 206.328.7714 or email: [ppactionwa@ppgnw.org](mailto:ppactionwa@ppgnw.org).

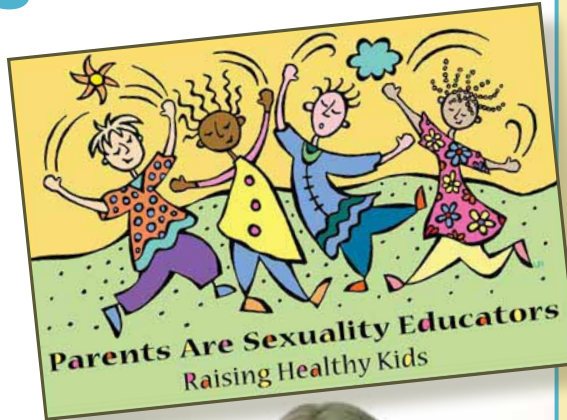
## Family Programs from page 1

Miller considers the family programs something that makes the biggest difference to our community in the shortest amount of time. They have been a part of the Education program in western Washington for 30 years, so there is a trained cadre of volunteers and staff in place to support a month long family program blitz called Washington Talks (see inset). In the Idaho counties that PPGNW serves, an all day family workshop is currently being offered. Family programs will be new to Alaska families, and Miller is excited to begin promoting them there in 2010. The decision to emphasize family programs in a month-long effort called Washington Talks was made as a way to highlight these popular programs and encourage and support families that want to start talking.

Parents and families in Idaho and Alaska can expect to see marketing campaigns for "Idaho Talks" and "Alaska Talks" in 2010. The cultures of these populations are different, and the marketing may differ slightly to recognize those differences. But Miller says parents everywhere, regardless of geography, want to be comfortable talking to their kids about this vitally important issue.

The first action steps will be to train enough volunteers to facilitate the workshops. Already this year, more than 35 volunteers have been trained for Washington Talks. Miller says family programs are far and away the favorite duty our volunteers sign up for.

"Imagine if everyone had the opportunity to improve their communication skills in this area," says Miller, "imagine if all families were able to talk comfortably about their values about sex. Research clearly shows that young people want this, and that they make better decisions for themselves when they have it. These programs help create healthy families."



## Parents Turn Out for Washington Talks

**"The best values for your kids on the subject of sex? Yours!"**

This was the catch phrase for an ambitious campaign by Planned Parenthood sex educators in the month of October, called "Washington Talks." And unlike other programs, the state-wide effort was not targeting young adults, but parents.

"Parents are the most effective sex educators," said Chris Charbonneau, President and CEO of PPGNW, "Studies show that teens rank their parents as the number one influence on the sexual decisions they make."

Coinciding with National Family Sexuality Education Month, the goal was to set up and facilitate 100 workshops for parents with kids of all ages. More than 35 volunteers were trained, and at press time for FOCUS, the organizers were well on their way to meet their goal. Workshops have been set up in schools, clubs, churches, and private homes.

Examples of workshop locations for Washington Talks include Olympia Community School, East Shore Unitarian Church in Bellevue, United Methodist Church in Puyallup, Westside Co-op Preschool, El Centro de la Raza, and the Pierce County Jail.

Washington Talks is the model for a much more widespread effort that will take place in 2010 in all three states that PPGNW serves. Family programs help not only families but communities as well. The mission of our organization is to ensure people can make informed choices about their reproductive and sexual health, and Washington Talks goes a long way toward making that happen.

## Young Professionals Raise Money for PPGNW Teen Councils

**The gym floor** at the Garfield Community Center in Seattle miraculously held up to the pounding it took when the Young Professionals held their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Planned Parenthood Prom on Saturday night, October 17<sup>th</sup>. Party goers were decked out in their best 80s prom attire for a night of dancing with DJ Disco Vinnie.

Refreshments were generously donated by Georgetown Brewing, Pike Brewing, and Baked in Seattle.

The proceeds from the Prom will benefit the Teen Council, a peer-to-peer education program that trains local high school students to become sexuality information resources for their classmates.

The Young Professionals of Planned Parenthood is a volunteer group for adults between the ages of 21 and 35. The YPs hold four major fundraisers each year that benefit various programs and create awareness of the issues surrounding reproductive healthcare. To learn more about the Young Professionals, please call the Volunteer Hotline at (206) 328-7713 or email us at [volunteer@ppgnw.org](mailto:volunteer@ppgnw.org).



## Healthy Youth Act—One Year Later

Everyone at Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest cheered when the Healthy Youth Act, the law that ensures students in Washington state public schools receive medically-accurate, age appropriate, and comprehensive sex education, went into effect in September of 2008. But one year later, what are the outcomes? How has it been implemented and accepted within the state?

First, a reminder of what the Healthy Youth Act is and isn't. The HYA simply states that if a school district chooses to teach sex education, it must include both abstinence AND information about other forms of contraception. The act does not mandate curriculum and school districts can

design their own as long as it meets the required medically-accurate guidelines as set by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The best news is that the HYA is in place and significant strides have been made toward implementation within many school districts. At the same time, challenges exist as parents, teachers, school boards, and local governments do their best to move forward through an issue as freighted with values as sex education.

More good news: school districts around the state have a great resource in the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA). This is a government agency that is there to help school boards with best practices and designing policy that is easily adapted to the needs of a

particular community. WSSDA has a model sexual health education policy available so school boards, already taxed with many other issues, don't have to re-invent the wheel.

The not-so-good news: implementation for some school districts around the state comes slowly and it is impossible to monitor all curricula and every class. And this is where we need your help. The education of our children requires involvement, and implementing the HYA is no different. Parents, students, and teachers need to be the eyes and ears of HYA implementation. If you would like help ensuring that your school is following the guidelines set up by the HYA, please email us at [ppactionwa@ppgnw.org](mailto:ppactionwa@ppgnw.org).

## Anonymous Patient Tells Story

**I am a young woman who spent the majority of her adolescent years making very risky decisions.** You name the risk factor for an STI, I had been there and done it. One of my most consuming fears was that I had contracted HIV somewhere along the line, and my poor decisions would thus follow me for the rest of my life.

I finally made the decision to go in and receive an STI test for the first time in my life, and I booked an appointment at Planned Parenthood. I chain smoked three cigarettes in my car before I finally mustered the nerve to walk inside. I was shaking from anxiety. Two employees were standing outside when I entered, both maternal-looking women. Both smiled and said hello, and one opened the door for me. The girls behind the counter were talking to each other and laughing, you know, the usual work-humor routine. Everyone seemed so happy and upbeat, my nervousness started to subside.

The nurse that filled out my charts before I saw the doctors looked to be about my age, and she made conversation with me about her haircut and the weather. This doesn't seem like a big deal, but you have to realize that making conversation with me at this point was like pulling teeth. My eyes were shifty, my palms were sweaty, my heart was racing - I was about two seconds away from sprinting out of the building. I very much appreciated her attempts at calming me.

The doctor arrived in the room, and I bluntly stated that I wanted to be tested for everything I might possibly have, except for HIV. She looked puzzled. I elaborated, saying that my worst fear in life is to test positive for HIV, and I did NOT want to do that test today. I was not ready. She explained the options, blah blah blah, urged me to consider it in a professional manner, and then began preparing the other tests. At this

point, the nurse re-entered the room, and said she heard I was anxious about an HIV test. I was starting to sweat. The room was spinning. What did I get myself into? The doctor returned to the room as well. These two women, I kid you not, spent a cumulative fifteen to twenty minutes speaking to me like a friend or a daughter rather than a patient, urging me to get it over with.

To be spoken to in this down-to-earth, non-threatening manner, and to have two clinicians taking time from their busy

schedules in an attempt to convince me to do something that was in my best interests, was enough. I hesitantly agreed to the twenty-minute oral test. I was on the verge of a panic attack when I walked up to the counter to pay the co-pay. Just 18 minutes until I find out which course my life will take, I was thinking. The woman behind the counter picked up on my nervousness, and made a polite and professional joke. Her gesture did not go unnoticed, but I still spent the remainder of the twenty minute wait in sheer terror, staring at the clock whose hands seemed to move in slow motion.

The test was negative. The gripping fear of HIV that was always hiding in the back of my mind was gone. All of a sudden, I was free to pursue healthy sexual relationships with people who weren't walking risk factors. I felt, for the first time in my life, that I deserved the best. I could think about marriage, about children, about a fulfilling sex life - the possibilities seemed endless! It was amazing what that negative test did for the quality of my life. The key message is I would never have taken this test had it not been for the friendly, compassionate, driven, concerned, and good-humored staff of the Everett Planned Parenthood. I owe my current peace of mind to their exceptional service. I highly recommend this facility to any woman who is plagued by the anxiety I once experienced.



# Western Region Wrap

**The first annual “Innovations and Generations” Conference** sponsored by the Planned Parenthood Western Region and hosted by PPGNW was held in Seattle on October 7<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> – with great workshop sessions, presentations, food, and weather!

Participants spent the first night at the Seattle Aquarium enjoying Thai noodles and salmon while listening to an all-women swing band, the Mood Swings. Affiliate staff, Board leaders, and volunteers participated in hands-on workshops – including role-playing around the issue of cultivating and promoting a new generation of activists and Planned Parenthood leaders, led by Building Movement Project.

Workshop sessions were centered around the “Innovations and Generations” theme and included interactive experiences related to technology innovations and how to reach our patients through telemedicine projects, communicate with them through the latest technological advances, and to steward and support them as reproductive rights advocates!

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest President and CEO Chris Charbonneau and PPGNW board member Llew Pritchard hosted a moderated discussion with Bill Gates Sr., on his recently published book, *Showing Up for Life*, and his past experience on the Planned Parenthood Western Washington Board of Directors. The conference concluded with the celebration of the Western Region and its chair, PPGNW Board member, Beth Hannley. Great job to all on a successful exchange of ideas and information!



PPGNW board member Llew Pritchard, Bill Gates Sr., and Chris Charbonneau.



Lu Arendt and Julia Piercey look for donations wherever they can find them.

(Below) A beautiful Seattle sunset at the Aquarium.



## HPV Update *from page 1*

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest began providing the vaccine almost immediately after its approval and has taken a leadership role in administering this important new drug. So how are we doing? Are the families who want the HPV vaccine able to get it and afford it?

Our efforts ramped up in 2007. Our medical staff was still being trained about Gardasil, and there were even some challenges in getting the amount of vaccine we requested from Gardasil’s manufacturer, Merck. Nevertheless, we were able to provide 1,372 doses of Gardasil in 2007.

2008 saw an uptick in our marketing for Gardasil. Part of that marketing was to inform the public that Gardasil

is covered in the federal *Vaccines for Children* program, allowing many patients to receive the drug for free. That year, PPGNW more than doubled the number of Gardasil doses we administered, to 3,086.

Although statistics for 2009 are not yet complete, we can project that we will increase our total again. We estimate this year we will provide at least 3,100 Gardasil vaccinations for our patients.

Yet some hurdles exist as we look to the future of the HPV vaccine. Since July, changes have made qualifying for the Vaccines for Children program more difficult, which can deter many families from getting Gardasil. Also, we have found that not all patients are coming back for the complete the series of three

separate injections as recommended for this vaccine. On average, patients receive 1.7 injections of Gardasil. This still provides them with some protection from HPV, but not as thoroughly as would the full compliment of three injections.

At press time, the FDA had just announced its approval of another HPV vaccine from GlaxoSmith Kline, called Cervarix, which will provide an alternative to Gardasil.

The goal of one day having a generation free of cervical cancer is a long gaze into a soft focus future. But identifying those at risk and providing access to Gardasil for our patients will bring that day closer.



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## Charity Navigator Honors PPGNW with Eighth Consecutive Four-Star Rating

We are proud to announce that Charity Navigator, the leading charity evaluator in America, has given Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest their coveted four-star rating for the eighth consecutive year.

A letter from Charity Navigator CEO, Ken Berger had this to say: "Only 1% of the charities we rate have received at least eight consecutive four-star evaluations, indicating that Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America. This "exceptional" designation from Charity Navigator differentiates Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust."

Our patients trust us for their reproductive healthcare. Our supporters trust us to carefully and efficiently manage their investment in our mission. And we thank you for your generous and continued support.



## We've gone color!

But don't worry: we are not spending your money unwisely. With ever-advancing technology in the field of digital printing and an innovative printer, we found we can get full-color impact for a two-color price. We hope you like it. We do!