

the advocate



fall 2013

Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts

Donor support and community partnerships bring *Seamos Honestos* to Eastern MA Empowering Parents to Educate Kids

PPLM is always looking for new ways to connect with parents, students and professionals who need our comprehensive sexuality education programs. We hear all the time from parents who are eager for tips and tools to help them talk with their children about sex and sexuality.



Since launching our bilingual parent education program, *Seamos Honestos*, in western Massachusetts, we've received lots of positive feedback from Spanish-speaking parents who attend workshops to learn how to better fulfill their role as the primary sexuality educators for their children.

Thanks to additional support from donors like you and a partnership with the Boston non-profit Horizons for Homeless Children, we've expanded *Seamos Honestos* to eastern Massachusetts. Over the summer, we provided two series of workshops for parents enrolled in Horizons' programs. PPLM's new bilingual parent educator, Rochelly, also offers workshops at organizations including the Boys and

Girls Clubs, and is building community partnerships to increase PPLM's bilingual education offerings throughout eastern Massachusetts.

Rochelly reports that many parents in her workshops come from traditionally underserved populations, and are eager to gain information and build confidence to talk with their children about sex and sexuality.

"Most of the parents I have encountered know that communication with their children around this topic is very important," Rochelly says. "But they lack the necessary information as well as the encouragement to feel comfortable being their kids' primary sexuality educators."

Key concerns of parents include bullying and how to protect their children from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Parents also come to the classroom with many myths and misunderstandings about sex and sexuality. By offering medically-accurate, age-appropriate information, *Seamos Honestos* helps parents and other caring adults dispel myths and promote open, honest communication with their children.

"It is so rewarding when parents understand that communication with their kids about sexuality is just as important as anything else," Rochelly says. "It pleases me when parents of small children and adolescents say they will teach their kids everything they learned in the workshops."

To learn more about PPLM's parent education workshops in English and Spanish, please visit pplm.org/parents.



viewpoint



It may be time to set our clocks back, but we're looking forward. In partnership with our Board of Directors, we are embarking on a strategic planning process. Looking back on our 85 year history, it's clear PPLM has thrived by meeting challenges with the steadfast commitment

of the people who care about our mission. Today is no different, and I am confident we will create a dynamic and exciting vision that ensures PPLM's success.

While we plan for the long run, we have immediate challenges. Our state is not immune to the politicized

attacks on women's health that have swept across states like Texas and North Carolina. With your assistance, we will make sure that dangerous bills to limit women's access to safe, legal abortion don't gain traction on Beacon Hill. And, with the Attorney General, we will be defending the state's Buffer Zone law at the U.S. Supreme Court where it is being challenged by those who protest at our health centers.

We've been a trusted voice for 85 years. Whatever the challenge, we're up for it!

Sincerely,

Martha M. Walz

Advocate spotlight: Drs. Veronica & Robert Petersen

Veronica "Ronnie" Petersen says her support for Planned Parenthood "goes way, way back." She learned about the importance of family planning and sexuality education from her mother, who was an early supporter of the

Guttmacher Institute, a hub of family planning research. When Ronnie and her husband Bob decided to support PPLM's new *Get Real Teen Council* program, they drew on their own experience as pediatric doctors, seeing what worked with teens. "I think peers are best for education," Ronnie says. "Kids relate better to their own age group."

As lifelong Planned Parenthood supporters, the Petersens were disappointed to see fights over the organization's funding and political attacks on its services in recent years. So they decided to support PPLM's peer education efforts through the Petersen Family Fund at The Boston Foundation. The Petersens say they have

"We should have wanted children in the world. That is the most important thing."



seen firsthand how important it is that teens have the information they need to make healthy decisions.

"You need education to have parenting work properly," Ronnie says. With the attacks on Planned Parenthood continuing, Ronnie and Bob say their support feels more important than ever.

Program spotlight

New Technology Will Empower Patients

As technology advances, more and more communication is moving online and on to smart-phones. What if we could give our patients more access to their personal medical information, and make it easier to get in touch with us?

That's exactly what we're working on, with the upcoming launch of the NextMD Patient Portal. Generous donors like you have helped us stay on the cutting edge of health care technology for years. We are excited to be among the early adopters using patient portals.

The portal will give patients better access to their medical records, including test results, so they are empowered to take control of their health. And the portal will improve communication, allowing us to send appointment reminders and other messages directly to patients by text message or other ways that are convenient for them.

Our staff is hard at work configuring NextMD, and we look forward to a full launch in 2014.



Upcoming Events

Support Planned Parenthood in your community by attending one of our upcoming events! For information about tickets or how to get involved with a future house party, email events@pplm.org.

We're also planning events in the following communities this spring: Boston, Brookline, Cape Cod, Chestnut Hill, Concord Carlisle, Lexington, North Shore, South Shore, Wayland, Wellesley, Weston, and Winchester. Contact events@pplm.org to get updates!

Join us!

December 2, 2013: Cambridge House Party

January 16, 2014: Newton House Party

February, 2014: Celebration of Choices

March 20, 2014: Young Friends of PPLM "Big Bash!"



@ppadvocacyma

Learn about the Advocacy Fund's work on Beacon Hill, in this year's elections, and more! www.pplmvotes.org

faces & places

Planned Parenthood supporters gathered at local house parties in the spring to support our health care, education and advocacy work. Events in Boston, Brookline, Concord/Carlisle, Lexington, Newton, Wayland, Weston, Wellesley, and Winchester raised more than \$500,000.



Images: **1.** Nancy Beeuwkes & Norma Shapiro, **2.** Ilene Greenberg, Denise Kasell, & Maria Marewski, **3.** Ashley Mason, Nathaniel Mason, Alison Packard, Zander Packard, Julia Clarkson & Steve Glick (event co-chairs), **4.** Barbara Kane, Rachel Somer (event host) & Nada Kane **5.** Scott Nathan, Marty Walz & Laura DeBonis (PPLM Board member), **6.** Ailene (Pixie) Robinson, Tom Lewis & Louisa Smith **7.** Anne Benning, Jane Clark & Alicia Abad, **8.** Larry Lebowitz, Marty Walz & Naomi Aberly (Party Hosts)

Images courtesy of HNR Photo and Natasha Moustache Photography.