

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GYT09 and *Real Life. Real Talk.*®

Planned Parenthood to use multimedia approach to reduce alarming STD infection rates

In light of alarming statistics regarding St. Louis' sexual health, Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region has announced two new social initiatives to help combat the number of people infected with an STD, and prevent infection in the future.

Currently, St. Louis is nationally ranked number one in chlamydia and gonorrhea, and is number five in the nation for syphilis and HIV. Last year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that one in four teenage females, ages 14 to 19, has an STD, one in five teenage females has HPV and half of all teens are sexually active.

“So much needs to be done in our community,” said Paula Gianino, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region, at a press conference on Thursday, April 2. “Planned Parenthood pledges to continue to provide new initiatives and awareness campaigns to make sure we are doing everything we can to help keep teens and young people healthy and safe.”

***Real Life. Real Talk.*®**

In 2005, 47% of female high school students and 46% of male high school students in Missouri reported having sexual intercourse. Yet, according to teen surveys, those who had close parent relationships were more likely to abstain from sex, wait until they were older to begin sexual activity, have fewer partners and use contraception more consistently.

Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region is starting a new educational and preventative initiative with parents in mind. A new, unique and innovative social change program, *Real Life. Real Talk.*® will help parents raise sexually healthy and responsible children, and to increase open and honest communication about sex between parents and teens.

Designed to be fun and easy, “Sex Ed for Parents” is a 90 minute program will give parents an inside look into their children’s world, and an understanding of adolescent behavior and how to more positively influence it. At the end of the class, participants will have the tools, understanding and motivation to talk about healthy sexuality and relationships with their teens.

Through community forums, web-based learning and a public awareness media campaign, Planned Parenthood hopes that *Real Life. Real Talk.*® will heighten awareness, shift attitudes, increase positive and meaningful community and family conversations, and strengthen knowledge.

For more information on *Real Life. Real Talk.*® visit www.realliferealtalk.org.

For more information about how to become a community partner, contact Erin Meyer at erin.meyer@ppslr.org or (314) 531-7526, ext. 336.

GYT09

Of the approximately 19 million new STDs that occur every year in the United States, most will go undiagnosed. By age 25, one in two sexually active young people will have an STD. Many STDs have no symptoms – so many of those infected may not know it and unknowingly infect others. Lack of information, misconceptions and social stigma keep many people from getting tested.

Through a partnership with MTV, the Kaiser Family Foundation, the CDC and Planned Parenthood, “GYT09,” aka “Get Yourself Tested in 2009” aims to spark a youthful social movement around getting tested for sexually transmitted diseases. Ultimately, GYT is designed to serve as a call to action that becomes part of young people’s vernacular. We already have OMG, LOL, BRB.... introducing GYT.

Through a series of lighthearted and provocative celebrity PSAs, MTV hopes to pique young people’s curiosity, get them talking about testing and drive them to *gyt09.org*, which will show young people how simple and easy it is to get tested, offer talking tips on how to broach the subject of testing with their partner and connect users to local testing facilities.

As part of this partnership, Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region is offering **free and low-cost STD and HIV tests** to anyone who walks into one of their six health care centers in the St. Louis area. Urine-based tests for gonorrhea and chlamydia and rapid-HIV tests that provide results in 20 minutes with a swab of the mouth, make testing incredibly simple.

For more information about testing, visit www.plannedparenthood.org or call 1-800-230-PLAN.

PLANNED PARENTHOOD LOCATIONS:

Central West End
4251 Forest Park Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63108
(314) 531-7526

St. Peters
208 Mid Rivers Center
St. Peters, MO 63376
(636) 279-3339

North County
Surrey Plaza II Shopping Center
2796-98 N. Highway 67
Florissant, MO 63033
(314) 921-4445

West County
1 Stonegate Center
Manchester, MO 63088
(636) 431-0030

Fairview Heights
Lakeland Square
4529 North Illinois
Belleville, IL 62221
(618) 277-6668

South Grand
3401 South Grand
St. Louis, MO 63118
(314) 865-1850

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