Our STARS are Educating Online!

New digital technologies have fundamentally changed the way we communicate and are increasingly influencing the lives of teenagers. For those seeking sexual health information, social media provides avenues to anonymously obtain answers to many of their questions. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 93 percent of youth, aged 12-17, are online and 17 percent have reported using the Internet to search sensitive health topics such as sexual health. Girls and low-income youth are most likely to seek sensitive health information on the Internet.

Realizing the importance of having accurate, reliable information online about reproductive and sexual health, PPSNE’s STARS (Students Teaching About Responsible Sexuality) are utilizing the power of social media to help educate their communities. PPSNE has 67 STARS throughout CT and RI, and many are working to develop content for each of PPSNE social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr.

For example, several of the New Haven STARS are producing videos about different birth control methods and how to select the option that will work best for them. In addition to sharing these videos through our social media sites, we also will include them in the new PPSNE iPhone application that is expected to launch this summer.

The STARS also work closely with staff to create microblog posts for PPSNE Teens Tumblr page. Most recently, Christopher, a STAR, wrote an article about the United Nations Women’s advertising campaign that uses Google searches to reveal the current widespread prevalence of sexism and discrimination against women. The microblog post, along with images of the ad series, was the highest viewed blog post on PPSNE Teens Tumblr during November.

With the help of STARS, our social media sites will serve not only as a resource for prevention but also provide sensitive, nonjudgmental health information to help improve the overall health of our community’s youth. To follow the STARS work on social media, search the hashtag #PPSNESTARS on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or Instagram.

Erin Livensparger, Regional Manager Education & Training, discusses important topics with PPSNE STARS in an engaging and lively way.

For the first time ever, STARS from five different cities all met in one location - Hartford. On December 7, sixty of our teen peer educators traveled from Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London and Providence to meet, network and focus on HIV/AIDS for the inaugural ALL STARS event. PPSNE will host three ALL STARS events this year in order to facilitate continued learning and team building.
2014, Here We Come!

Judy Tabar, President & CEO

This year, a very special “New Year’s resolution” finally came to fruition for millions of Americans. January 1, 2014 marked the first day of health care coverage for those who enrolled in insurance plans made accessible by the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or Obamacare. In Connecticut, the number of newly insured in 2014 is estimated to be approximately 62,000; in Rhode Island the number is roughly 11,000. This is a remarkable achievement for our mission and for the communities we serve.

With millions more insured across the country, many of the people we serve now have an increasing number of health care options available to them. Therefore, we are taking bold steps to ensure that Planned Parenthood of Southern New England continues to be a provider of first choice for reproductive health care in our communities. By embracing technological innovations, expanding our youth programs, using social media, and enhancing the look and feel of our health centers, we will continue to meet the needs of our patients and our communities. In this new era of health care, there is simply no other organization better positioned than Planned Parenthood to make a significant difference in improving key sexual and reproductive health outcomes for women, men and teens.

We know that even with Obamacare, many newly insured individuals lack an understanding of what their new coverage includes - such as birth control with no co-pay along with a host of other well-woman services at no charge. That’s why we’re continuing the work we began last year to educate our communities on what Obamacare means for them. Furthermore, we take every opportunity to encourage our patients to get involved in advocacy efforts around the law, so that health care remains accessible to millions of women and their families across the country. In addition, for those who continue to lack insurance, we promise to be there for them, no matter what. None of this would be possible, however, without your support. Thanks to you, all of our patients – insured or uninsured – can continue to access the care they need and deserve at PPSNE.

For all that is new and exciting ahead of us in 2014, another round of an old fight looms on the horizon. Attempts to limit women’s access to abortion – both at the federal level and in state legislatures around the country – continue to demand our time and attention. We stand ready to do all we can to ensure that abortion remains a safe and legal medical procedure for women to consider if and when they need it. We are emboldened by the knowledge that you, as our most loyal supporters, stand with us in this fight. Together, we will continue to ensure a bright future for the women, men, and families of CT and RI.

We are taking bold steps to ensure that Planned Parenthood of Southern New England continues to be a provider of first choice for reproductive health care in our communities.

On behalf of all of us at PPSNE, thank you for your support. Best wishes to you and yours this New Year!
Pat Fuller-Rose: Supporting and Believing in Planned Parenthood for All Women

Pat Fuller is a President’s Circle member and a former staff member, volunteer and board member of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England.

When people ask me why I support Planned Parenthood, I reply “Why wouldn’t I?”

I grew up with a grandmother in Pennsylvania who often went to Philadelphia for meetings with Alan Guttmacher long before he founded the Guttmacher Institute. I heard stories from my mother’s friend Mrs. Healy, a volunteer at PP in Scranton, Penn., who would have to pack up diaphragms and take them home at the end of the day in case there was a raid. That’s what it was like in the 1930s and 40s. This left me with a pretty vivid memory of how women were regarded by the law and by medical practitioners at the time.

Planned Parenthood became an important “haven” for me in Rhode Island when I divorced. I wanted to work and felt lucky to be hired by PP as a clinic assistant. I never regretted it. I loved it! I became part of the PP Movement. I became one of the staff who worked with the patients to resolve any barriers to their care.

I believe in PP because it is an organization that respects women and believes they can make their own choices about their body and their health. No one but a woman and her physician should decide the kind of health care services she needs. After all these years, we shouldn’t still have to battle against those who would like to see PP disappear.

Over the years, I became the one telling the stories about PP to my children and grandchildren—stories that left me with memories I will never forget. And when my daughter entered the job market after college and the Peace Corps, Family Planning International Assistance was her first employer. She has been engaged in women’s health issues mostly in the third world and mostly in non-profit organizations for more than 30 years. I know I have had an impact, and I will always stand with Planned Parenthood of Southern New England because they provide reproductive health care to women, men and youth in need.

Sharing the ACA with Family and Friends

We can all agree that the start of the first enrollment period of Obamacare has been rough. The technical issues with Healthcare.gov and the relentless political attacks by opponents of the law have left a tremendous amount of uncertainty and confusion for millions of Americans who are anxious to see the promise of the health care law realized.

PPSNE wants to ensure that the women of CT and RI can get enrolled in the more affordable health insurance plans that are now available to them so that they can start to feel the real impact of this law. That’s why Planned Parenthood is working hard to make sure our patients and our communities understand what the law means for them – and that they have all the facts they need to get enrolled and to find a plan that works for them. Here are five of those facts:

1. All plans cover preventive care – including annual well-woman exams, birth control, and cancer screenings – for free, without a co-pay.

2. Every plan must cover the full range of prescription birth control methods (pills, implants, IUDs, etc.) for free without co-pay. But some plans will require a co-pay for certain brands, so you should check with the insurer to be sure your preferred brand is covered for free, and if not, find out how much it will cost.

3. Every plan will cover essential maternity services. Some prenatal services and screenings are offered free with no co-pay, as well as breastfeeding counseling and services. The other covered services and co-pay amounts vary greatly from plan to plan, so make sure you know what and how much a particular plan covers before selecting it.

4. Insurance plans have a “network” (or list of providers) where you can use your insurance. Not every plan will include every provider, so check to see if your current provider is included in the plans you are considering.

5. Enrollment is ongoing. The final deadline to enroll is March 31, 2014.

For more information like this, check out the Planned Parenthood online resources, ppsne.org/Obamacare and for Spanish language, ppsne.org/asegurate, which include a new cost calculator that estimates what kind of financial help you can get and information on how insurance works.
On November 7 we honored three extraordinary men in Rhode Island. More than 150 people joined us in helping to commemorate the important work of Congressman David N. Cicilline, Dr. Pablo Rodriguez and Don E. Wineberg.

“We were proud to honor three extraordinary men who have worked, and continue to work, tirelessly on behalf of Rhode Island women,” said Judy Tabar President & CEO of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England. “We stand with and support these incredible men, and all Rhode Islanders who continue to advocate for and support women’s health care services.”

Cicilline stated, “I am proud to stand with Planned Parenthood of Southern New England in their ongoing efforts to protect women’s health in Rhode Island and stand up against those who are trying to turn back the clock on progress for women across this country.”

Rodriguez added, “PPSNE is not just a health facility; it is a Human Rights Center.”

Wineberg concluded, “PPSNE continues to fight for these important human goals and I’m honored to continue to help achieve them.”

All proceeds from the event went to care for PPSNE patients who receive high quality health care, regardless of their ability to pay.
On November 14 we celebrated the grand opening of our new health center location at 319 Main Street in Manchester. More than 65 supporters, staff and advocates of PPSNE gathered inside the center for a ceremonial ribbon cutting. PPSNE welcomed Dr. Jewel Mullen, state Department of Public Health Commissioner, Leo Diana, Mayor of Manchester, members of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and others to the new center location.

The ribbon cutting ceremony opened with a heartfelt thank you from Judy Tabar, President & CEO of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, and continued with a warm welcome from Mayor Diana. Dr. Mullen described the impact PPSNE has on Connecticut and concluded with words of encouragement. “I am so proud of the work Planned Parenthood has, and continues to provide communities all over the state of Connecticut,” Mullen said.

The center was designed using People – Preparation – Process. The empty shell of our new space was literally constructed with an endless supply of duct tape, cardboard and innovative ideas. The front desk, exam rooms, entry ways, corridors and support offices were accurately built out of cardboard and then critiqued by staff. We also invited our teen volunteers and college interns to review the layout and provide feedback on the center during the design phase. The space was redesigned again and again in order to provide the best experience for our patients and staff.

The Manchester health center relocation was made possible by a generous grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, including funds from the Edith W. and John Davis Murphy Fund. PPSNE will continue to extend the same high quality, affordable reproductive health care it provides to all of its patients in this new location. The new location offers convenient, free parking off American Legion Drive, a state-of-the-art facility and walk-in and same day appointments.

“A patient recently walked in and said ‘we deserve this.’ She then looked at the staff and said ‘you deserve this, too.’ That is really special,” Tabar said.
PPSNE is Engaging in the Latin@ Community

When thinking about Latin@s in the United States, Connecticut isn’t a state that immediately comes to mind. Although California, Texas and Florida are the states with the largest Latin@ populations, our Latin@ community is growing rapidly. Currently, it is the largest minority population in the state—representing 14.2 percent of Connecticut’s residents.

The immigrant community is also growing—the majority in Connecticut’s population is of Puerto Rican descent. New Haven has been at the forefront of impacting the lives of Latin@s, being the first city in the country to issue municipal IDs as part of an effort to protect and welcome immigrants. Latin@s are making their voices heard statewide, and PPSNE is committed to supporting their efforts.

In order to help raise awareness in the Latin@ community about reproductive health issues, PPSNE recently hired Dieniz Costa as its Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator to focus on Fair Haven, a large Latin@ neighborhood in New Haven. Since May, she has worked with two neighborhood women to develop the Pa’lanteLatin@s Promotores Program. The promotoras (health promoters) are trained on sexual health education and advocacy and are given the tools they need to advocate for access to quality health care for all. The promotoras have gone door-to-door in the neighborhood, attended health fairs and festivals, and collaborated with local public schools to educate parents.

This past fall, our promotoras spread the word about the Affordable Care Act, a subject that most Latin@s report knowing little about. This information is critical as 29 percent of Latin@s lacked health insurance in 2012. Our promotoras say they are starting to see their impact on the community as evidenced by the expressions they see on people’s faces when they learn that they may now have access to affordable health coverage.

One of our promotoras, Edita, believes “this work is important to me because I get to orient people to the services of Planned Parenthood, especially those who are uninformed, because my community doesn’t have all the details on what’s happening in our society. It’s important to attend events where there is a lot of information to be shared.”

The work PPSNE does every day is impacting Fair Haven, and we’re proud to work with community partners like JUNTA for Progressive Action, the Fair Haven Community Health Center, CARE at Yale, neighborhood associations and schools. PPSNE is committed to educating our patients and community members about the new health care law as we work to achieve health equity for everyone in CT.

NOTE: Please note the use of the spelling Latin@s to include, both Latinos and Latinas.

How the ACA is Already Benefiting Women

Sara B., a senior at Trinity College (from Hartford), wrote to us and said:

“I’m one of the estimated 27 million women from all corners of the country who are already benefitting from the birth control coverage rules, and I’m not willing to stay silent while politicians in Washington try to take it away from me.”

Join us as we shift the focus onto the solution – making sure that every American without health insurance can get the coverage they deserve – no matter what.
**Tech Rewind: A Look Back at How PPSNE Moved Forward**

Technology is a driving force in nearly everyone’s daily life. From “checking-in” at a favorite restaurant to sending a tweet to family and friends, we rely on technology in a myriad of ways. Technological upgrades and improvements were emphasized as one of Planned Parenthood of Southern New England’s key factors for the future in its Five-Year Strategic Plan adopted in 2011. While many of these upgrades are being accomplished behind the scenes, we are thrilled to highlight five things that we have done, or plan to do soon, that will greatly benefit PPSNE patients.

**ONE**
The Patient Portal is currently being used at four health centers, and we plan to expand it to our other health centers soon. Like its name implies, this website offers our patients direct access to information, such as lab results, visit summaries and more. The safe, secure and informative site allows our patients to view the information in their medical record whenever, and wherever, they might need it.

**TWO**
In an effort to be mindful of our patient’s time, we have streamlined the paperwork required at each visit. Our Information Technology (IT) staff worked diligently to bundle multiple consent forms into one document, meaning there is less paperwork for patients to fill out, ensuring a shorter visit time.

**THREE**
IT also introduced patient history tablets to collect medical records. Instead of relying on pen and paper, our patients are now given state-of-the-art tablets so they can enter their pertinent medical history digitally.

**FOUR**
PPSNE health centers were also equipped with new laptops, which replaced outdated computers. These large screen laptops are lightning fast and have proven to be valuable not only to staff but also to our patients. Clinicians in exam rooms can pull up information, diagrams and instructions quickly and review them with a patient on-the-spot.

**FIVE**
For the first time ever, digital signs will broadcast content in each of the health centers. These 42” screens display trivia games, social media feeds, videos, upcoming events and more. This cutting-edge technology will help educate and entertain our patients when they visit a health center.

With an eye on enhancing our patients’ visits through reduced wait times and interactive and varied content, we have worked hard on improving our technology infrastructure. The work does not stop here though. As technology is ever changing and evolving, we remain committed to following the latest trends, advancements and innovations in order to meet the needs of our patients and staff.

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- Gretchen Raffa
- Camelle Scott-Mujahid
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**Save the Date!**

**SPRING LUNCHEON 2014**
Featuring Sarah Weddington

**When:** April 9

**Where:** Stamford Marriott
243 Tresser Boulevard
Stamford, CT 06901

For more information, contact Laurie Diorio at 203.865.5158, or via email at special.events@ppsne.org.
Charitable Gift Annuities: Your Commitment Can Pay You Back

Your generosity and commitment to our mission is helping us make incredible things happen in CT and RI. Did you know that you can make a gift to PPSNE that will also provide you with income during your lifetime?

With a charitable gift annuity (CGA) you or your designated beneficiary can receive income during your lifetime and you will be able to take a charitable income tax deduction. If you fund your gift with appreciated securities, you will also minimize the impact of the capital gains tax on the stock's appreciation in value.

When you make an irrevocable gift to establish a CGA, PPSNE will agree to make fixed payments to you or your designated beneficiary(ies) for life. The gift agreement is a straightforward contract between you and PPSNE. Your payments become one of our general obligations, fully backed by Planned Parenthood, and will not be lowered or increased, regardless of changes in the economy.

A CGA is a perfect way for you to create a lasting legacy and help to ensure that PPSNE can continue to provide high quality care, education and advocacy for future generations.

For more information on CGAs or to get a confidential, personalized proposal, please contact us at giving@ppsne.org.

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*Consult your financial or legal advisor to determine if this type of gift is right for your circumstances.

Comedian Sandra Bernhard brought laughter to the stage at the Funny Feminist Fearless fundraising event in Westport, CT. Joining PPSNE favorite Lizz Winstead, the duo entertained supporters, advocates and the community with stories of their coming of age, family and continued support of women's reproductive health care.

Show your support by making a contribution today at ppsne.org/give or call 203.865.5158

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