

Help us: Meet the Regional Demand for Sexual Health Education

Our Goal: \$1,542,000 (three years of education in six counties)

Your investment will directly impact the lives of **45,000 youth and adults (over three years)**, and meet the high demand in one or more of these counties:

- Butte
- Contra Costa
- Marin
- San Francisco
- Shasta
- Solano

With your help, Planned Parenthood Northern California (PPNorCal) will **hire and/or sustain 10 staff members** to deliver much-needed education in underserved areas. This support will make it possible to **say yes to many more requests** from schools and nonprofit agencies whose needs have gone unmet to date.

These communities need us.

In these counties, there are no other organizations that have the level of expertise in **delivering accurate and unbiased sexual and reproductive health education** in schools and other venues such as women's shelters, LGBTQ+ centers, drug/alcohol recovery programs, and juvenile halls.

Our education programs:

- Are **culturally relevant, nonjudgmental, and trusted** in the community
- Inform and empower people around critical topics, beyond those of standard sexual/reproductive health, including: **gender identity and sexual orientation, consent, respect and tolerance**, and the key tenets of reproductive justice
- Are delivered in a collaborative model, as we **partner with diverse organizations**

Education is a key tactic in fighting STI/STDs.

Today, California has the **highest infection rates ever on record** for several Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs, aka STDs)—especially in rural regions. **We need your help to fight this public health crisis.**

Syphilis, including congenital Syphilis, has returned at an alarming rate after becoming almost nonexistent. Gonorrhea and Chlamydia infections are both increasing as well. For example, in Shasta County, since 2011:

- **Syphilis infections increased by 1,200%**
- Gonorrhea infections rose by 800%

At our Redding Health Center, in only four months during spring/summer 2018, we diagnosed 20 cases of Syphilis—a huge increase from similar time periods in the past. In addition to preventing STIs, **our education programs increase detection and treatment** by promoting testing at our health centers. In a recent study, PPNorCal determined that over **50% of our patients had learned about our services from one of our education programs**.

California mandated the nation's best Sex Ed.

In January 2016, California's Healthy Youth Act (AB 329) took effect. Now the State requires the most comprehensive and progressive sex education in the nation. Yet in reality, school districts are on their own to comply with the law—and most lack the resources and expertise. **All districts in PPNorCal's service area need our help, and increasingly reach out to request it.** Your contribution will ensure we can provide assistance to more schools.

Snapshot of Education Staffing Needs

- Butte:** PPNorCal does not currently have any educators in the county, which is home to a large university (Chico State). In the past year, we received 25+ requests from schools to provide education in Butte, which we were unable to fulfill.
- Contra Costa:** In a county that is home to six PPNorCal health centers, we currently have only one educator. She implements our very active *Promotores* peer education program, while also delivering all other educational activities. The demand continues to overwhelm our ability to deliver.
- Marin:** PPNorCal does not currently have any educators in Marin County, and demand is high. We provide some education in the county, but it's difficult, time-consuming, and expensive for educators based in other regions to travel and deliver it.
- San Francisco:** The most densely populated city we serve, with both residents and commuters, the City has one of the largest HIV-positive populations in the country. As we plan to open our new SF Flagship Health Center in 2020, we must also meet the increasing demand for delivering education.
- Shasta:** The funding cycle for one of our significant federal grants will end this fiscal year, and it will not be renewed. The grant currently funds two staff positions in Shasta. Even with those educators delivering classroom presentations 5-7 periods per day, PPNorCal is currently able to meet only about 50% of the requests we receive in the county—where STI rates are high.
- Solano:** Solano is also a hot spot for STIs, especially the town of Vallejo. PPNorCal had a designated educator in recent years, but the position was eliminated due to recent budgetary issues. The need remains great.

Real Life Impact: A Story

At a high school, our educator facilitated a discussion in response to recent social media posts about sexual assault in the area. After class, a student confided to the educator that she had been sexually assaulted. At her request, the educator provided support while the student reported it to the Principal and three police officers. Afterward, the student expressed her desire to start an on-campus support group for students who have experienced sexual assault, with our educator's support.