



Influencing High School Graduation Rates Through Effective Sexual Health Education

Mofiyinfoluwa Obadina, MD

Project Advisor: Andrew Aigne, MD, MPH



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The goal of this CARE project is to connect Rochester City School District (RCSD) middle and high schools with community organizations that are already implementing evidence-based, age-appropriate sexual education curricula. This is with the overall goal of reducing unintended teen pregnancy, and thereby increasing high school graduation rates.

METHODS

- Identify Rochester-based community organizations and programs with effective curricula.
- Identify and partner with one or two RCSD schools that will be receptive to introduction of above curricula.

BACKGROUND

RCSD graduation rate was 53.5%, vs. Monroe County Suburbs and NYS at 91% and 80% respectively. One significant reason that has been cited is that of unintended teen pregnancy. Though falling, US teen pregnancy rates are substantially higher than other western industrialized countries. Racial and ethnic disparities persist with highest rates in Hispanic and non-Hispanic black women.

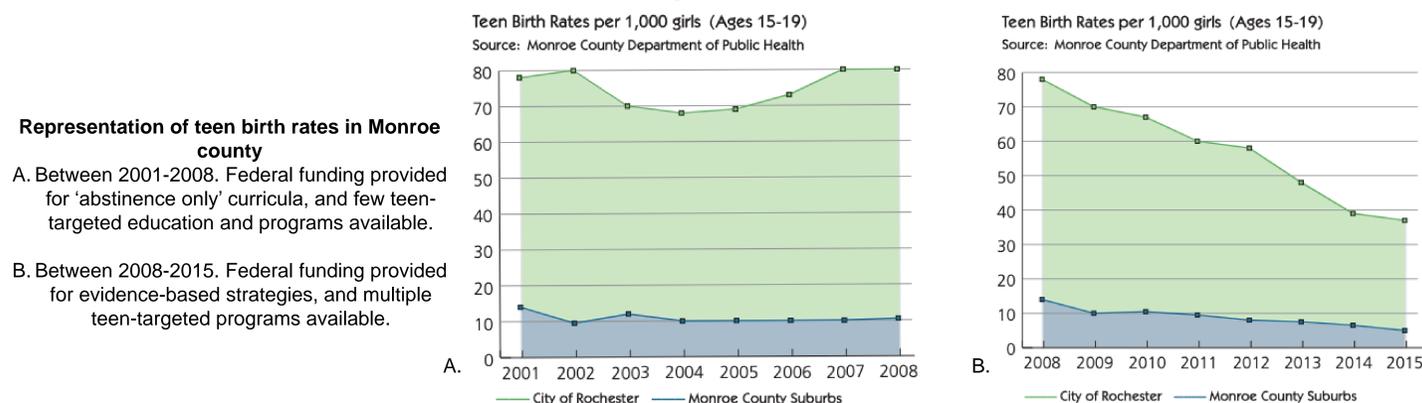
Short-term and long-term impacts include:

- increased rates of unemployment and incarceration.
- lower income level.
- repeated cycles in children.

Studies have shown that effective interventions to prevent unintended teen pregnancy:

- Involve evidence-based, comprehensive approach to reproductive and sexual health education.
- Need continued reinforcement and longitudinal exposure at multiple points.
- Require access to contraceptive and reproductive health services.
- Involve community-level efforts.

RCSD students are not systematically receiving comprehensive evidence-based sexual education.



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Introduction of curriculum
- Consider assessing and comparing attitudes around sexuality and safe sex practices.
- Expand with further introduction to other RCSD schools.
- Work with community organizations to expand and gain funding for educators and continued success of programs.

REFERENCES

- Perper, K., Peterson, K., Manlove, J. *Diploma Attainment among Teen Mothers*. Fact Sheet. Publication #2010-01. Child Trends.
- Murphy J., *RCSD graduation rate rises to 54 percent*. 2019. Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.
- Stanger-Hall, K., Hall, D. *Abstinence-Only Education and Teen Pregnancy Rates: Why we need comprehensive sex education in the US*.
- Perry, S. *Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program Findings show Benefits, Challenges of Evidence-Based Programming*.
- Shuger, L. *Teen Pregnancy & High school dropout: what communities can do to address these issues*. 2012. Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and America's Promise Alliance.
- Kirby D. *Emerging Answers 2007: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. 2007. Washington, DC: The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 2007

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

