



Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis, Inc.

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Testimony in support of Teen Pregnancy Prevention

CT Department of Social Services

My name is Camellia Redway, Program Director for the Teen Outreach Program (TOP) at Coordinating Council for Children in Crisis (CCCC) in collaboration with Augusta Lewis Troup School in New Haven Connecticut. We are in the fourth year of teen pregnancy prevention funding. CCCC has been trained to utilize the science-based Wyman Teen Outreach Program model that is committed to ensuring program fidelity, utilize service learning to foster community engagement and make vulnerable students the givers rather than receivers of help. I have been placed in a wonderful position at our local middle school where I have acknowledged how important it is to talk to our youth. It's important to speak on a personal level and have them understand the world they live in and how they are able to make changes for themselves and/or others. The TOP students complete a minimum of 1000 service learning hours each year. The Wyman TOP program is evidenced-based and results show students participating in TOP have a 60% lower rate of school dropout, 14% lower rate of school suspension, 11% lower rate of school course failure and 33% lower rate of teen pregnancy.

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy estimates that in 2004:

- Teen childbearing (teens 19 and younger) cost Connecticut taxpayers (federal, state and local) \$98 million.
- Of the total teen childbearing cost in Connecticut, 47% were federal cost and 53% were state and local cost.
- Between 1991-2004 there have been more than 48,700 teen births in Connecticut, costing tax payers a total of 1.9 billion over that period.

- In Connecticut the average annual cost associated with a child born to a mother 17 and younger is \$6850

Annual tax payers costs associated with children born to teen mothers included:

- \$23 million for public health care (Medicaid and SCHIP)
- \$34 million for child welfare
- \$37 million for incarceration
- \$20 million to loss tax revenue, due to decreased earnings and spending.

We would like to maintain the Teen Pregnancy Prevention funding to preserve the uninterrupted delivery of science-based teen pregnancy prevention program for at-risk youth. Service learning influences the students to become better people in their homes, schools and general communities. This program will put forth outstanding students who will eventually give back to their communities.

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