EVIDENCE-BASED SEXUALITY EDUCATION IN CT

IVA KOSUTIC, PhD MFT
AGENDA

1. Background on teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections in CT
2. CT Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP)
3. PREP Participants
4. Participants’ perceptions of PREP
5. Implementation challenges
STATE OF AFFAIRS
CT TEEN BIRTH RATES HAVE BEEN ON A DECLINE …

... BUT DISPARITIES REMAIN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Birthrate per 1,000 women aged 15-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waterbury</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Britain</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meriden</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeport</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwich</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Hartford</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Haven</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killingly</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CT DPH Vital Records.
… BUT DISPARITIES REMAIN

Source: CT DPH Vital Records.
… BUT DISPARITIES REMAIN

Source: Guttmacher Institute from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
AND, THERE ARE

STIs

TO CONSIDER
YOUNG PEOPLE MAKE UP A QUARTER OF THE SEXUALLY ACTIVE POPULATION IN THE US

Source: CDC.
BUT THEY CONTRACT ABOUT HALF OF ALL STIs ANNUALLY

Source: CDC.
ADDITIONALLY, THEY ACCOUNT FOR ONE THIRD OF THE NEW HIV INFECTIONS EACH YEAR

Source: CDC.
IN CONNECTICUT

3,207 TEENS WERE DIAGNOSED WITH CHLAMYDIA IN 2016

Source: CDC.
IN CONNECTICUT

378

TEENS WERE DIAGNOSED WITH GONORRHEA IN 2016

Source: CDC.
IN CONNECTICUT

54 TEENS WERE DIAGNOSED WITH HIV IN 2015

Source: CDC.
STIs ARE PREVENTABLE
IF WE WANT TO PREVENT STIs, SEXUALITY EDUCATION IS KEY!
PREP

- Administered by the FYSB and funded through the Affordable Care Act of 2010
- In Connecticut, PREP programs:
  - Educate young people on healthy relationships, including pregnancy and STI prevention
  - Build refusal, negotiation, and decision-making skills
  - Address both abstinence and contraception
  - Utilize evidence-based curricula
  - Teach adulthood preparation subjects, including life-skills and development
  - Cover all 20 sexual health topics highlighted in CDC’s School Health Profiles
PREP

- Planned and implemented by the PREP Advisory Council:
  - DPH (lead agency)
  - DCF
  - DMHAS
  - PPSNE
  - True Colors
  - Klingberg Family Services
  - Partners in Social Research
PREP HAS SERVED OVER 8,500 YOUTH

Source: CT PREP Evaluation.
PREP SETTINGS AND CURRICULA

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys.
PREP CURRENTLY OFFERS

• Three evidence-based programs (EBPs)
  1. Be Proud! Be Responsible!
  2. Making Proud Choices!
  3. Reducing the Risk
CT PREP CURRICULA

- Included on ACF list of EBPs
- Promote healthy relationships:
  - refusal skills,
  - negotiation skills, and
  - decision-making skills
- Teach abstinence and contraception

- Interactive content:
  - group discussions,
  - hands-on exercises,
  - videos,
  - role-play, and
  - workbooks.
CT PREP CURRICULA

• Be Proud! Be Responsible! and Making Proud Choices!
  • Negotiation and refusal skills
  • Safe and responsible choices

• Reducing the Risk
  • Refusal skills and delay tactics
  • Abstinence and communication with family
IN ADDITION TO CURRICULA, PREP OFFERS:

- Educator training
- Educator manuals
- Student workbooks
- Posters & brochures
- Condom demonstrators
- Condoms for demonstration
- Birth control kit
- Technical support and cofacilitation
- Program evaluation
- Funds for substitute teachers
THERE IS NO COST TO
SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND
PARTNER AGENCIES
PREP PARTICIPANTS
GENDER

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys
AGE

Average age

- MS: 12.9, n=638
- HS: 15.2, n=5,330
- ALL: 15.5, n=8,058
- JUV: 15.9, n=416
- PSYCH: 16.1, n=79
- ALT: 16.2, n=271
- DCF: 16.2, n=541
- CBO: 16.3, n=512
- YAS: 21.9, n=271

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys
ETHNICITY / RACE

% Youth

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys
SEXUAL ORIENTATION

% youth*

Straight  LGBTQ+

100

80

60

40

20

0

DCF  n=467

YAS  n=176

CBO  n=423

ALL  n=6,088

HS  n=4,603

ALT  n=138

JUV  n=255

68  32

69  31

76  24

85  15

87  13

90  10

95  5

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys. *Question not asked in FY2018 and not asked in middle schools.
BEFORE PREP
EVER HAD SEX?

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys. *Question not asked in middle schools.
EVER BEEN OR GOTTEN SOMEONE PREGNANT?

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys. *Among those who ever had sex.
USED CONDOMS CONSISTENTLY?

Source: CT PREP Entry Surveys. *Among those who were currently sexually active.
AFTER PREP
Was program interesting?

Source: CT PREP Exit Surveys.
WAS PROGRAM INTERESTING?

• “It's been a blast. I had fun while learning about real life situations. The class has taught me a lot of things. Next time I am about to have sexual intercourse I am going to use a condom.”

• “This program was interesting even though I knew mostly everything that was being taught before this program. However, the activities were fun to participate in and absorb more knowledge on the subject than before.”

• “I like it, it was fun and the material presented itself in games or activities to grab our attention into the topics.”
DID PROGRAM PROMOTE LEARNING?

**Source:** CT PREP Exit Surveys.
DID PROGRAM PROMOTE LEARNING?

• “I learned all the risks to having sex and how big of an impact it can have on your life. I liked learning about the different types of birth control and ways to not getting std’s [sic] and pregnant.”

• “It made me think twice before I did something. I liked everything I learned. I learned how to protect myself for when I choose to have sex.”

• “This helped me in my life because now I know how to be careful against STDs.”
MORE LIKELY TO ABSTAIN?

Source: CT PREP Exit Surveys.
MORE LIKELY TO USE CONDOMS?

Source: CT PREP Exit Surveys. *Among those who did not intend to abstain from sex.
CHALLENGES
IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

• Inclusion
• Recruitment
RECRUITING SCHOOLS

• CT law mandates HIV education (C.G.S. Section 10-19(b))

• Additionally, CSDE recommended 12 hours of research-based sexual health education per grade sequence in 2015-2016

• But:
  • Only 54% of CT schools taught all 19 sexual health topics listed in CDC’s School Health Profiles in 2016
  • Most lead health teachers wanted professional development on sexual health topics, but less than half received it

Source: 2016 School Health Profiles.
RECRUITING SCHOOLS

Source: 2016 School Health Profiles.
RECRUITING SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: 2016 School Health Profiles.</th>
<th>US Range</th>
<th>US Median</th>
<th>CT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>received PD</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wanted PD</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligning lessons with district scope &amp; sequence</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>60.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>received PD</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>31.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>wanted PD</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>20.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creating a comfortable &amp; safe learning environment</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>57.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>received PD</td>
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<td>57.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>wanted PD</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting students to sexual health services</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

• Inclusion
• Recruitment
• Administrative obstacles
TAKEAWAY

• PREP is well-received

• PREP promotes learning

• PREP influences young people’s intentions around sexual risk taking

• It is important to provide evidence-based sexuality education in schools and in programs serving youth with system involvement