

TEEN PREGNANCY TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2010

I. Call to order

Legislator Vivian Vilorio-Fisher, 5th District called to order the second meeting of the Teen Pregnancy Task Force at 3:10 PM on February 17, 2010 in the Suffolk County Legislative Building, North County Complex, Hauppauge, NY 11788.

II. Roll call

The following persons were present and officially appointed as Teen Pregnancy Task Force members:

Janet P. Cassidy, SC One-Stop Employment Center, Virginia Corbett, RN., L.I. Teen Freedom, Jennifer Freeman, Suffolk County Executive Office, Lorraine Gariboldi, Life Center of LI, Inc., Laura Giardino, CNP, Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Sandra Gil, Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Nancy Hemendinger, Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Penny Ilberg, Department of Social Services, Molly Licalzi, Eastern Suffolk BOCES, Ann Maurren, Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Christina Noonan, Planned Parenthood, Judith Specht, RN., Stony Brook Hospital, Marcia K. Spector, SNAP, Lorraine Squires, Mastic Moriches Shirley Community Library, Vivian Vilorio-Fisher, Legislator, 5th District

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Minutes were reviewed with two changes. First change h) they “are proud when their teen daughters are pregnant” was changed to they “don’t see it as negative when their teen daughters are pregnant”, second change i) “schools are not willing to promote contraception” to “schools are not mandated to promote contraception”. Marsha Spector made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Judith Specht, minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. Open issues

- a) Vivian Vilorio-Fisher reported that it is imperative that we schedule the four public hearings. Lorraine Squires had information regarding scheduling at Mastic Moriches Shirley Library. Available dates were 5/4, 5/13, 6/3 and 6/8. It was decided to schedule the public hearing for Tuesday, May 4th, 2010 at 7:00 PM. The address is 407 William Floyd Parkway, Shirley, NY 11967. Laura Giardino asked who should attend public hearings and Vivian Vilorio-Fisher responded that everyone should attend if possible. If there are multiple members from a specific agency, at least one person should attend. Attendance at the public hearings should include geographically diverse

community members. The meeting will be published in the newspapers and the county website. All members should invite people they know who show an interest in teen pregnancy. Vivian Viloría-Fisher reported that meeting times will depend on neighborhood and transportation issues.

- b) Sandra Gil was introduced and commented that having the public hearing location at Touro Law School will be difficult for many teens. She suggested Brentwood Library or the Town of Islip Recreation Center as possible sites. Sandra wants the site easily accessible since the town of Islip has the highest incidence of teen pregnancy. Marsha Spector knows a board member at the Brentwood Library and will inquire about availability. Sandra will check availability at the Town of Islip. Sandra suggested that the public hearings be announced at the Project Home health fair on April 17th. Tentative public hearing dates were set for 4/20 or 4/22 at either the recreation center or the library, starting at 3:00 PM.
- c) Riverhead County Center public hearing was tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 25th at 7:00 PM. Vivian Viloría-Fisher will secure the date.
- d) Babylon Town Center was tentatively set for the week of April 26th, either 4/26, 4/28 or 4/29, whichever date is available at 7:00 PM. Virginia Corbett will check on those dates.
- e) Vivian Viloría-Fisher recommended electing a chairperson and co-chairperson for the Task Force, asking for any nominations from the floor. Christina Noonan nominated Marsha Spector and Marsha suggested Judy Specht for co-chairperson. All were unanimously in favor, none opposed. Marsha accepted the position.
- f) Sandra Gil distributed handouts listing statistics from the Suffolk County Department of Health Services Prenatal Program Teens by Ethnicity for 2005-2009. The handout compared numbers between pre-natal interviews and actual births. Sandra stressed the relevance of the immigration reforms since 2001 and the Temporary Protection Status (TPS) for Salvadorians. People secure permanent status in this country and then their families follow them here. Children don't know their parents, they resent living here, they are not supervised and they become easy targets; men over 21, gangs, isolation and depression. We need to address children in school, but we must not forget about the parents. Families must be included since many were teenage mothers themselves. We need to work more efficiently to stop rapid teen pregnancy rates since they come from a "poverty disadvantaged background" not just because they are Latino. The Suffolk County health centers serve the largest group of prenatal teens. Virginia Corbett commented that L.I. Teen Freedom offers bi-lingual presentations to both youth and parents. Sandra stated that public hearings must address parent's concerns and we need to identify their priorities. Virginia Corbett commented that many pregnant teens are also children of single moms. Judy Specht commented that girls 13-15 years of age who have sex with 25-28 year old men is common behavior. Sandra Gil responded that many times girls are left with a caregiver and there are 15-20 people living in the house, parents would prefer to see their daughter with someone in the house who is working than out on the street.

Lorraine Squires commented that it's not always an ethic issue; it's very common with all races in this country.

- g) Lorraine Gariboldi and Virginia Corbett commented on the success of their agency's work promoting abstinence in the areas of Hempstead, Deer Park and Massapequa. They addressed the issues of reaching parents regarding condoms, contraception, and abstinence. Vivian Vilorio-Fisher asked if she could provide statistics on the success of abstinence. Lorraine distributed abstinence studies to each task force member for their review. She also reported on the popularity of the morning after pill and its availability. Nancy Hemendinger responded that *HealthSmart* is a comprehensive health education program which includes an abstinence unit and a comprehensive sex education unit. The sixth grade program addresses puberty and abstinence. Nancy distributed handouts from NYS Health, Physical Education and Home Economics Standards and Performance Indicators. Nancy reported that Suffolk County works in 46 school districts and has trained over 2100 teachers. Nancy invited task force members to attend a monthly *HealthSmart* training.
- h) Lorraine reported that L.I. Teen Freedom received a \$3 million grant and has been very successful reporting a 30% drop in teen pregnancy. Nancy responded that we all must work together comprehensively to achieve our goal. She said we need to focus on discussion regarding the lower numbers of teen pregnancies in the African American community which is the result of economic gains and a sense of hope. Their population has also dropped significantly in the last 20 years.
- i) Vivian Vilorio-Fisher questioned the awareness of HIV; Christina Noonan responded that there is not enough education regarding HIV and people have become negligent in that area.
- j) Vivian Vilorio-Fisher reported that there were teen pregnancy articles in The New York Times on June 18th and June 27th, 2009. Lorraine Squires will research the articles and email to all task force members.
- k) Vivian Vilorio-Fisher asked all task force members to provide their email addresses for future email notices.
- l) Marcia Spector asked members to consider their expectations for the next meeting. Janet Cassidy inquired as to what areas the L.I. Teen Freedom Agency reaches. Virginia Corbett responded that they reach about 7000 children in grades 7-12. Their original grant was ending, but has been picked up privately. Christina Noonan commented that we need to evaluate contributing factors to teen pregnancy, such as labor and transportation, not just education.
- m) Nancy Hemendinger presented the K-12th grade *HealthSmart* curriculum. Christina Noonan was concerned about high school students who might not take a health class until their senior year. Marcia Spector asked if Wyandanch has implemented the *HealthSmart* curriculum. Nancy responded that they have been trained. However, a low number of teachers responded to the year-end survey, so she does not have an accurate implementation number. Sandra Gil reported that Wyandanch is showing initiative to get information to the

students (vision, hearing and dental). Marcia explained that Wyandanch suffers from lack of staffing. Vivian Viloría-Fisher questioned who pays for the HealthSmart supplies. Nancy explained that the school based initiative is funded by the Master Settlement Agreement. The initiative includes: comprehensive health education, youth empowerment programs and youth cessation. Eastern Suffolk BOCES is our contract agency that assists with programming.

- n) Lorraine Squires reported on a program on MTV called “16 and Pregnant”, a reality show that follows pregnant teenagers. Christina Noonan responded that their information is accurate.
- o) Virginia Corbett and Lorraine Gariboldi presented drawings made by 7th graders describing feelings.

V. New business

- a) Marcia Spector suggested the Task Force continue discussion about what we can accomplish to prepare for the public hearing.
- b) Vivian Viloría-Fisher would like everyone to check catchment areas for people who may show an interest in attending. (young people, schools)
- c) Next meeting will be on Monday, March 1st at 2:00 PM.

VI. Adjournment

Marcia Spector adjourned the meeting at 4:55 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Ann Maurren