

HENNEPIN COUNTY

MINNESOTA

Hennepin County has been alerted that its five-year Office of Adolescent Health Tier 1 B Teen Pregnancy Prevention grant will be cut short by two years – with distribution of that funding now marked to end June 30 of 2018 instead of 2020. This comes as part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' larger stated intention to halt \$213.6 million in teen pregnancy prevention programs and research at more than 80 institutions around the country. This Trump Administration action will prematurely end five-year grants awarded by the Obama Administration that were designed to find scientifically valid ways to help teenagers avoid unwanted pregnancies. HHS Secretary Tom Price and other top Trump appointees oppose comprehensive sexual health education and birth control, advocating abstinence rather than contraceptives to control teen pregnancies.

As a result of these indicated funding cuts, we anticipate the following impacts on outcomes and progress made towards reducing teen birth rates in Hennepin County.

- **GOOD PROGRESS WILL BE CUT SHORT** – We stated we would reduce teen birth rates by 30 percent in five years in the five geographic areas of Hennepin County where teen birth rates and STI rates are highest. To date, we've achieved a 14.5 percent reduction in those areas. Achieving an additional 5 percent reduction in the coming year will still mean missing our target by 10 percent or more.
- **OUR REACH WILL BE HALVED** – Our five-year goal was to reach ~27,000 students in middle schools, high schools and clinics with our biggest reach being in the last three of those five years. Cutting the program by two years will mean we will reach ~12,000 students in 31 schools and clinics, but another ~15,000 youth will be missed. How many will become teen parents?
- **COMMUNITY-BASED PREGNANCY PREVENTION EFFORTS WILL BE GUTTED** – This grant currently supports 28 health educators and a portion of their administration in six community based organizations – that's a lot of jobs and expertise to lose and they rely on these resources to do their work in our community. Recent loss of United Way funding for teen pregnancy prevention work leaves them even more reliant on grant funding to sustain their work.
- **SCHOOL-BASED EXPERTISE WILL BE ERODED** – The funding cut will mean the reduction, if not elimination, of essential training to many of our health educators and teachers in four school districts, further handicapping the success potential of the program.
- **COUNTY LEADERSHIP EXPERTISE WILL BE JEOPARDIZED** – The grant comprises 65 percent of Hennepin's total teen pregnancy prevention budget for 2018, and funds close to 75 percent of the staff in the program. We've invested deeply in our personnel who are experts in teen sexual health. They provide extensive training, technical assistance, quality assurance monitoring, grant oversight and resource development. Loss of federal funding will result in loss of critical expertise and reduce our scope, breadth and depth of services provided without additional funding.
- **NEITHER BIRTH CONTROL NOR ABSTINENCE ARE THE SIMPLE ANSWER** – It's not just about youth having access to contraceptives that has reduced our teen birth rates. Comprehensive sexual health education is a key pillar in helping young people delay parenthood and make other choices for their lives, like finishing their high school education. Sexual health education provides critical information so that young people can make informed decisions about if and when they want to become sexually active and how to protect themselves. Research shows that education along with access to high-quality reproductive health care, healthy youth development opportunities and connections to caring adults gives us the best results.

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