



Engaging and Retaining Pregnant and Parenting Teens

“Strive for understanding rather than to be understood.”





A Quick Overview

- Who we are, our projects
- Intake
- Staying connected
- Approach
- Partnerships
- Involve support people



Young Parent Support Network of Ottawa

- St Mary's Home and Community Outreach Centre
- Salvation Army Bethany Hope Centre
- Youville Centre
- Emily Murphy Non-Profit Housing Co-op





Brighter Futures for Children of Young Parents (CAPC)



- **Community Action Programs for Children (CAPC)** funds community coalitions to deliver programs for children (0-6) and their families living in difficult circumstances
- CAPC places a strong emphasis on partnerships and community capacity building and recognises the individual needs of each community





Buns in the Oven (CPNP)

- **The Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP)** funds community groups to develop or enhance programs for vulnerable pregnant women
- CPNP aims to reduce the incidence of unhealthy birth weights, improve the health of both infant and mother and encourage breastfeeding





“People would not be resistant if the approaches were appropriate”



Engaging Young Parents

With and For Youth

- Include youth in every step
- Ask and listen
- Collaborate not lead
- On their terms in their space
- Informal, drop-in settings, dedicated to youth
- Comfortable, friendly safe environment
- Be patient, dependable
- Must build TRUST and RESPECT
- Focus on strengths
- Recognize the power of peers
- Include Fathers/male figure
- Provide training to youth

Food and Fun

- Vary your communication style
- Consider literacy level
- Use humour
- Make it FUN
- Avoid preaching
- Use incentives: food, bus tickets or transportation, snacks, childcare, schools credits
- Friendly reminders
- Include time for social support

Plan

- Learn about your population
- Examine your biases
- Work with partners
- Funding
- Start where the community is
- Build on best practices
- Build in evaluation, database
- Choose appropriate host agency, one-stop location, service dedicated to young parents
- Establish confidentiality, consents and child protection procedures
- Youth friendly promotion, registration process and forms

Staff

- Flexible
- Willing
- Patient
- Open minded
- Willing to examine and challenge their own beliefs
- Team players



Intake Process

- Start to build trust
- Time to learn their real needs
- Tour, introductions
- Connect to the person who they will see at the next visit
- Ensure there is a reason for them to come back.... soon!





Staying Connected

- Database, phone contact
- Interagency sharing of staff
- Key support staff
- “Detached Outreach”
- Mix of programming styles
- One-stop shopping





Approach.....

- Hold back on advice until asked
- Ask questions: “What do you think...” or “How do you feel about...”
- Use the “voice of the child”
- Model the behaviour you wish to see
- Ask their opinions
- Try to break down stigmatization





One Stop Shopping

- Partnerships are key
- Obstetrical clinic, contraceptive clinic and adolescent clinic
- Foodbank
- Satellite classroom with school board





Involve Support People

- Partners, parents, friends
- Young Father's Program
- Video: "Believe in Me!"





*“Don’t try
harder, try
differently”*





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Come visit us in Ottawa!

