



A Healthy Baby Begins with You

Update from the Office of Minority Health

August 2, 2011

Garth Graham, M.D. M.P.H.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health



A Healthy Baby Begins with You

- ❑ Launched in 2007, the *A Healthy Baby Begins with You* infant mortality awareness campaign targets the African American community, to combat its disproportionately high rates of infant deaths.
- ❑ Tonya Lewis Lee, bestselling author and award-winning television producer is the national campaign spokesperson.

Native Baby Project

- ❑ In 2011, we began a three-year **Native Baby Project** in partnership with the Urban Indian Health Institute, a division of the Seattle Indian Health Board.
- ❑ The project addresses the high infant mortality rates in the American Indian communities, with a focus on urban populations.
- ❑ Two reports about the project's progress are on our website.

A Healthy Baby Begins with You Preconception Peer Educators (PPE) Program

The PPE program focuses on preconception health, which research has shown as one of the most significant predictors of birth outcomes and infant health.



Preconception Peer Educators (PPE) Program Goals

- Enlist college students as peer educators on their campus and in their community.
- Disseminate key preconception health and care messages.
- Program is moving into middle and high schools.

Knowledge of Risks

- ❑ Our current evaluation and formative research has shown that young people have suboptimal knowledge about pregnancy and associated risks and even less knowledge about the risks for bad pregnancy and birth outcomes.

Reproductive Life Plan

- ❑ PPE's promote the importance of a **reproductive life plan** for women and couples, to be developed with their health professional.
- ❑ A **reproductive life plan** might increase the number of planned pregnancies and encourage persons to address risky behaviors before conception, reducing the risk for adverse outcomes for both the mother and the infant.

Preconception Peer Educator (PPE) Program and CDC Goals

- ❑ The PPE Program furthers achievement of:
 - ❑ CDC Goal 1: Improve the knowledge and attitudes and behaviors of men and women related to preconception health.
 - ❑ CDC Goal 4: Reduce the disparities in adverse pregnancy outcomes.

Preconception Peer Educator (PPE) Program and CDC Recommendations

❑ The PPE Program puts in practice the action steps for following recommendations:

- ❑ **1. Individual responsibility across the lifespan.** Each woman, man and couple should be encouraged to have a reproductive life plan.
- ❑ **2. Consumer awareness.** Increase public awareness of the importance of preconception health behaviors and preconception care services by using information and tools appropriate across various ages; literacy, including health literacy; and cultural/linguistics contexts.

PPE Program: The Life-Course Perspective

□ The PPE Program uses Dr. Michael Lu's concept of the life-course perspective as its guiding principle. This explains the program's continued emphasis in going younger and younger and focusing on all aspects of life, or on the social determinants of health, as a way to, ultimately, influence birth outcomes.

Preconception Peer Educator (PPE) Program Accomplishments

- ❑ We have shifted from single campus efforts to state-wide initiatives with state/county health department's, CBO's and schools.
- ❑ 800+ students have been trained as PPE's
- ❑ More than 60 colleges and universities participate in the PPE program in: California, Delaware, Florida,, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland/D.C., Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Virginia.

PPEs Outreach Efforts

❑ College to Community Health Outreach Week in Chicago, April 2011: *Heroes for Healthy Schools Week*

❑ PPEs came to Chicago to lead activities related to healthy school food and environments. They trained K-12 students and teachers, supported awareness efforts such as Chefs in the Classroom, led physical activities with partnership organizations, and helped with beautifying playgrounds.

❑ Partnerships: PPEs sites collaborate throughout the year with Healthy Start Projects in their community. They serve to extend the reach of organizations.

Evaluation Study

- ❑ Identify key behavioral indicators for next phases of the program as well as further evaluation efforts.
- ❑ Monitor and evaluate results in the “innovator” group (existing group of peer educators.)
- ❑ Continue to monitor and analyze other process, media or progress indicators.
- ❑ Inform future assessment efforts on the program’s impact among intended audiences
- ❑ Inform program refinement and/or shape or validate next steps.
- ❑ Report will be online in September, after publication of journal article.

Journal Article

Taking the pulse of progress toward preconception health: Assessment of a national OMH program for infant mortality prevention.

Journal of Communication in Healthcare, 2011 Vol.4, No. 2

3rd National Summit on Preconception Health and Healthcare

OMH co-sponsored the CDC Summit in June. The work of our Preconception Peer Educators was featured at a Lunch Plenary Session, moderated by our national spokesperson.



Evaluation Study – Results (Embargoed)

Cont.

- ❑ Increased confidence in sharing preconception health knowledge with peers and adults.
- ❑ Increased knowledge of preconception health and care.
- ❑ Having adequate knowledge about risks factors for pregnancy can lead to limiting exposure to those risks.
- ❑ **Role model factor.** In minority communities, college students as peer educators are themselves the message.

Evaluation Study – What about Providers (Embargoed)

- ❑ Based on our study we decided to focus on providers for September.
- ❑ You may like this news: **Providers are the preferred source of information among PPEs.**
- ❑ But they have also felt that providers are not as receptive to their questions and when they mention “preconception health,” providers just recommend “the pill.”

September 2011

- ❑ September is Infant Mortality Awareness Month

Theme:

***A Healthy Baby Begins with You...and Us.
Healthcare providers take on infant mortality***

- ❑ Professional conference:
Place, Race, and Poverty: Strong Predictors of
Birth Outcomes
September 30, 2011
Nashville, Tennessee

Dreaming forward

- PPE Campus to Community Partnerships Development Pilot Project
- Develop Preconception Health University Level Modules (requested by several faculty advisors, this will ensure mainstreaming of the program.)
- Despierta*: Latino Preconception Health Study (already in progress)
- Establishing PPE Campus Organizations
- Conduct panel studies to evaluate the impact of the campaign and the PPE program on target audiences.

A Healthy Baby Begins with You

OMHRC

info@minorityhealth.hhs.gov

800-444-6472

<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov>

Twitter: @MinorityHealth

