



Planned Parenthood of Montana

For Immediate Release: January 24, 2018

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Planned Parenthood of Montana offers Making Proud Choices Curriculum Training

Billings, MT—Too many young people experience unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Montana's statistics are at or slightly above the national average on most sexual health indicators. However, health disparities among Native American (NA) youth demonstrate that unintended pregnancies and STIs are experienced at an alarmingly high and disproportionate rate. NA adolescents have the highest birth rate of all other racial groups in Montana. The pregnancy rates for NA youth in Montana are more than three times greater than that of white youth. NA youth aged 15-19 in Montana have a Chlamydia rate that is nearly three times higher than the rate for white youth. In addition, the teen birth rate for NA youth is 76.6 per 1000 compared to the national teen birth rate of 27.4 births per 1000 (Montana Adolescent Sexual Health Report 2016). Twenty-three percent of NA middle school students report ever having sexual intercourse compared to twelve percent of Montana middle school youth overall (Montana Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2015). This data indicates that NA youth need information at a young age in order to delay first intercourse and/or reduce their risk for an unintended pregnancy as well as STIs.

Evaluations of comprehensive sex education programs show that these programs can help youth delay onset of sexual activity, reduce the frequency of sexual activity, reduce number of sexual partners, and increase condom and contraceptive use. Importantly, the evidence shows youth who receive comprehensive sex education are NOT more likely to become sexually active, increase sexual activity, or experience negative sexual health outcomes. Effective programs exist for youth from a variety of racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Making Proud Choices is an 8-module sex education curriculum developed for middle and high school aged youth that has been proven effective. The goal of the program is to reduce sexual risk taking behaviors emphasizing the use of condoms and empowering teens to make their own decisions about how they can be sexually healthy.

Planned Parenthood of Montana (PPMT) has implemented the Making Proud Choices (MPC) curriculum, with cultural adaptations, with Native American youth on three reservations in Montana over the past six years. The results of the program include a positive change in attitudes, beliefs and perceptions towards sex as well as an increase in use of condoms and birth control with the youth who reported to be sexually active. At the same time, the teen birth rates have decreased in the counties where the curriculum has been implemented.

PPMT will offer a MPC curriculum training for educators during the Montana Indian Education Association Conference April 3-6, 2018 in Billings, Montana. The training will be offered at no additional cost to educators who register for the MIEA conference. However, participants must pre-register and attend all 16 hours of training to receive a certificate of training and contact hours. Some financial assistance is available to training participants.

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About Planned Parenthood of Montana (PPMT). PPMT is a state-wide organization that provides reproductive health care, including life-saving cancer screenings, birth control, testing and treatment for STDs, breast health services, Pap tests, sex education and advocacy for individual rights. PPMT is one of 59 affiliates of Planned Parenthood Federation of America. www.plannedparenthood.org/montana