

# Responsible Sexual Behavior

## Goal

Promote responsible sexual behavior to prevent pregnancy among teens, unintended pregnancy among young adults, and to decrease the risk of sexually transmitted diseases among all Delawareans.

## Objectives

1. By 2010, increase the proportion of teens who abstain from sexual intercourse or use condoms if currently sexually active from 79% to 85%. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 25-11]
2. By 2004, implement an evidence-based media campaign to promote responsible sexual behavior.
3. (Developmental) By 2005, increase the proportion of middle schools that implement a culturally competent, effective, age-appropriate curriculum promoting responsible sexual behavior in the context of a coordinated school health program to 65%. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 7-2]
4. By 2010, maintain the proportion of youth that report remaining abstinent before age 13 at 90% [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 25-11]
5. By 2010, increase the percentage of sexually active adults 18 years or older that use a condom during sexual intercourse from 26% to 35%. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 13-6]
6. By 2010, reduce the incidence rates of gonorrhea and chlamydia by 15% to 190 and 315, respectively, per 100,000 population.
7. By 2010, limit the prevalence of HIV infection among women of child-bearing age to 0.25%.
8. By 2005, reduce the birth rate for teenagers aged 15 through 17 years from 39.2 to 33.3 per 1,000.

### Notes:

The numeral assignment of each objective does not indicate priority, simply enumeration.

“Developmental” objectives are those that currently do not have state baseline data and, therefore, have no operational definitions. The purpose of developmental objectives is to identify areas of emerging importance and to drive the development of data systems to measure them.

## Important roles for each sector\*

### Business

- Offer insurance with contraceptive benefits, create or participate in jobs programs for youth, and (for large businesses) provide sexual health information and referrals.

### Community

- Encourage parent-child communication about responsible sexual behavior, provide outreach and education to youth, and involve youth in after school and weekend activities.

### Health Care

- Train and assign health professionals to sensitively counsel and refer patients, and provide resources and guidance to parents on communicating with their children.

### Education

- Implement and advocate for effective sexuality and sexual health education in coordinated school health programs, and partner with families to encourage responsible behaviors.

### Government

- Monitor implementation by insurance companies of mandated contraceptive benefits, assure training and technical assistance for educational programs, fund peer programs, and expand school health centers



# Healthy Delaware Hero



## Patricia Lincoln

Patricia Lincoln is the education coordinator for the Pennsylvania Mid-Atlantic AIDS Education and Training Center of Delaware. She works on the front lines with the AIDS population, bringing hope and balance to people who are sick, scared, and often overwhelmed. She helps her clients to

access services and helps to educate the broader community about HIV and AIDS through the Peer Education Group, where participants speak to students and community groups about AIDS.

Pat, a 30-year nursing veteran with a master's degree, has presented programs both nationally and internationally concerning HIV issues. Each year, the Center sponsors a Christmas party for clients with AIDS. Pat's dream is to show up at the party and find no new patients in attendance.

## Resources (General)

- Alliance for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, (302) 428-6363, fax (302) 428-2530, [www.contactdelaware.org/comminfo/y20zr86o.htm](http://www.contactdelaware.org/comminfo/y20zr86o.htm) - information on teen pregnancy prevention programs
- Delaware Division of Public Health, (302) 739-3033, fax (302) 739-6617, [www.state.de.us/dhss/irm/dph/hmpc.htm](http://www.state.de.us/dhss/irm/dph/hmpc.htm) - curriculum development assistance; education programs; 'train the trainer' classes; condoms; fact sheets; brochures; state policies; pregnancy, STD, and AIDS data; Teen Hope program
- Delaware HIV Consortium, (302) 654-5471, fax (302) 654-5472, [www.delawarehiv.org](http://www.delawarehiv.org) - annual resource guides that highlight available resources throughout the state; policy, treatment, and service guides; annual STD/HIV conference
- Planned Parenthood of Delaware, (800) 230-7526, fax (302) 655-1907, [www.ppdel.org](http://www.ppdel.org) - education, brochures, and fact sheets on preventing pregnancy and STDs

The mentioning of specific programs does not connote endorsement and was not meant to be exclusionary. We apologize for any unintentional omissions; please bring these to our attention.

## Closing the Gap

Delaware's five-year (1993-1998) average pregnancy rate for Black teens (ages 15-19) is more than twice the rate of white teens (Black 110.6/White 40.4). Teen birth rates are highest in Sussex County and the City of Wilmington.

Disparities in both sexual risk behaviors and untreated disease within a population result in higher sexually transmitted disease (STD) and HIV/AIDS rates in Delaware youth, African Americans, and men who have sex with men. Delaware has the fourth highest Chlamydia rate and the fifth highest AIDS rate in the nation. In 1999, almost two of every three STD cases were among African Americans, and one of three were below 20 years of age.

Responsible sexual behavior, particularly teen pregnancy prevention, has been a major focus of our state, including abstinence education and school-based health centers. Although rates have declined, a long-term commitment to eliminating disparities requires continuing and expanding culturally competent, community-based programs, outreach, education, and services statewide, focusing on heavily impacted areas.

