



# State of Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals  
Office of the Secretary

January 14, 2016

The Honorable John A. Alario, Jr., President  
Louisiana State Senate  
P.O. Box 94182  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

The Honorable Taylor Barras, Speaker  
Louisiana State House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 94062  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear President Alario and Speaker Barras:

Pursuant to Act 534 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session by Representative Patricia Smith, The Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and the Department of Education (DOE) submit this report on its review and evaluation of programs available to educate the youth of Louisiana about the importance of preventing teen pregnancy and the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

DOE, DCFS, and DHH are continually committed to providing comprehensive education and services to youth in Louisiana through a wide variety of programming across the departments and state. The recommendations in this year's report are very similar to last year's, as all departments involved have continued to build upon existing programs and recommendations from years past. The numbers have been updated to reflect current participation. We are passionate about this issue and will continue to make these programs a priority.

If you have any questions concerning the report, please contact Lauren Gleason, Policy Director at the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, 225-342-2025 or [Lauren.Gleason@la.gov](mailto:Lauren.Gleason@la.gov).

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John White in black ink.

John White  
Superintendent of Education

Handwritten signature of Suzy Sonnier in black ink.

Suzy Sonnier  
Secretary, DCFS

Handwritten signature of Rebekah E. Gee in black ink.

Rebekah E. Gee, MD  
Secretary, DHH

## **Programs Available Through the Department of Education**

The following programs and initiatives are in place at the Louisiana Department of Education LDE addressing teen pregnancy and the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

### **YRBS and School Health Profiles**

LDOE is funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to assess the effectiveness of sexual health education programs using the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS) and the School Health Profiles Survey (Profiles). In the current funding cycle, Louisiana was only eligible for Strategy 1 funding (Surveillance).

The YRBS is a national school-based survey of high school students which is implemented by the LDOE biennially to monitor priority high-risk behaviors among youth. The survey is administered to randomly selected high schools. Students are asked, but not required, to complete the survey. The survey focuses on priority risk behaviors including Alcohol and Other Drug Use, Obesity, Physical Activity, Mental Health, Tobacco, Injury/Accident Prevention, and Violence and Bullying. Results from the YRBS are used to guide programs and policies that support health and set and track progress toward achieving school health and health promotion program goals.

A second survey, Profiles, is a school personnel survey that assesses school health policies and practices. Profiles, also conducted biennially, is used to assess school health policies and practices in states, large urban school districts, territories, and tribal governments. The survey monitors the status of school health education requirements and content, physical education and physical activity, school health policies related to HIV infection/AIDS, tobacco-use prevention, and nutrition, asthma management activities, family and community involvement in school health programs, and school health coordination.

Data from both surveys is shared with schools and school districts to inform decision-making regarding programs and policies related to student behavior and health.

### **Health Education Standards**

Louisiana's Health Education Content Standards, which are contained in BESE Bulletin 103, offer a coherent vision of what it means to be health literate. Health literacy is the capacity of an individual to obtain, interpret, and comprehend basic health information and services and the competence to use such information and services in ways that are health enhancing for the individual, family, and community. These standards identify the knowledge and skills essential to the development of health literacy. In addition, the standards provide a guide for enhancing and continuing education of teachers and as a blueprint for local curriculum developers. The standards are broad enough to allow flexibility according to strengths or challenges identified in each community and to make them culturally relevant.

A fundamental mission of schools is the promotion of healthy behaviors by providing individuals with knowledge, abilities, and skills to become healthy and productive citizens. Optimal health

leads to effective living, learning and enjoyment of life for all individuals. It is also an asset for students facing intense competition, peer pressure, stress, and a full program of intellectual and physical activities. The primary purpose of health education is the translation and integration of health concepts into personal behavior. Alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use as well as low levels of physical activity, poor nutrition, injuries, teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and stress contribute to a lower health status and result in loss of work and school time.

Health education in schools is essential to enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to practice good health. Implementation of planned, sequential health curricula has been linked to changes in students' attitudes and behaviors. Poor health habits often carry over into adulthood. Students who follow good health habits are more alert, perform at a higher level, are absent less, and have greater self-esteem.

Traditionally, the health education curriculum has been organized around health content topic areas. Today, greater emphasis is placed on health and wellness. The Health Education Content Standards are an ideal means for providing guidelines for curriculum addressing high-risk behaviors and healthy lifestyles.

The CDC has identified six risk behaviors that are incorporated in the organization of the Health Education Content Standards. The six risk behaviors include:

- Tobacco use;
- Sedentary lifestyle/poor physical activity patterns;
- Alcohol and drug abuse;
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors;
- Behaviors that result in accidents and injuries; and
- Sexual behaviors that result in STIs and unintended pregnancy.

The Louisiana Health Education Content Standards framework is designed to guide the process of reforming health education in this state. It provides the following:

- a framework for developing a comprehensive K-12 health education curriculum;
- a catalyst for insightful discussion of the fundamental nature of health education;
- a guide for evaluating progress and achieving health education benchmarks among the students of Louisiana;
- a vision of health education for the state; and
- a tool to enable local districts, schools, and educators to grasp the nature, purpose, and role of health education.

### **Programs Available through the Department of Children and Family Services**

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) focuses on three core goals for the agency's vision: working to keep children safe, helping individuals and families become

self-sufficient, and providing safe refuge during disasters. DCFS does provide direct services that are explicitly focused on preventing teen pregnancy, but as part of DCFS's work to encourage the health and safety of families it has several programs that are aligned with the need to prevent teen pregnancy in Louisiana and to support pregnant teens by providing them with services that can help them build parenting skills.

DCFS administers federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant funds for the state. All TANF-funded services must meet one of four TANF Goals:

Goal 1: Provide assistance to needy families so that children can be cared for in their homes, or the homes of relatives.

Goal 2: End dependence of needy families on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.

Goal 3: Prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies.

Goal 4: Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Therefore, as part of its work administering TANF funds, DCFS provides funds to several programs to address Goal 3, "Prevent and reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies."

DCFS strives to support families and help them thrive. Through our foster care and adoptive services, at risk children and families receive services like parenting classes and case management services in addition to access to family resource centers. Also, through DCFS's commitment to funding parent-focused programs like the Nurse-Family Partnership, alternatives to abortion and CASA teen parents are engaged and help them to choose adoption opportunities for their child or access services that can help them become better parents.

### **Abortion Alternatives**

DCFS currently funds two service providers that provide alternatives to abortion for expecting teen parents. These service providers are able to offer services state-wide by subcontracting with 17 service providers in all regions around the state. Contractors are required to provide intervention services including crisis intervention, counseling, mentoring, support services, and pre-natal care information, in addition to information and referrals regarding healthy childbirth, adoption, and parenting to help ensure healthy and full-term pregnancies as an alternative to abortion. In FY2015, 5,411 people were served.

### **Court-Appointed Special Advocates**

Through the Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program, CASA, DCFS funds mentors to children offering support and guidance. This encouragement and empowerment to be successful in becoming a responsible decision maker, helps deter the child from engaging in risky behaviors such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, school dropout, etc. In FY2015 CASA focused on pregnancy prevention, goal setting and career development for 22,464 children.

### **Drug Courts Program**

The Drug Courts Program served 13,099 clients last year by providing counseling to children and family members on the basic need to be free of alcohol and substance abuse, and the benefits

of completing one's education. Through these initiatives, there is an added outcome of teen pregnancy prevention.

### **Jobs for America's Graduates Louisiana**

The Jobs for America's Graduates Louisiana (JAG-LA) Program provides intervention and improved life prospects for students who show evidence of failing, dropping out or engaging in negative behaviors that can lead to dependency, out-of-wedlock births, imprisonment, and/or other undesirable outcomes which may lead to the detriment and impoverishment of youth. There were 21,916 participants in the Multi Year Model Program, 1,610 in the Out-of School Model Program, and 5,456 in the Middle School Model Program in 2015.

### **LA 4 Public Pre-Kindergarten Program**

Research indicates that at-risk children who attend quality preschool programs have a decreased incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies, high school dropouts, and incarceration. The LA 4 Public Pre-Kindergarten Program will meet these goals through the provision of early education and support services for all enrolled four-year-olds and their families, serving an average of 15,496 children in FY 2015.

### **Programs Available Through the Department of Health and Hospitals**

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office of Public Health (OPH) has several teen pregnancy programs across the state:

#### **Teen Outreach Program® (TOP®)**

TOP® is a 9-month program implemented in community based settings in select parishes in Louisiana that have the highest rates of teen births. It serves children from ages twelve to seventeen. Wyman Center Inc.'s TOP® provides communities and organizations with a tested framework for creating and/or enhancing youth development efforts that empowers teen to lead successful lives and build strong communities. This program is one of only a few that is proven effective in increasing school success and prevention teen pregnancy. A total of 6,475 Louisiana youth have enrolled since TOP® started in 2011 reaching 93% of the programs goal of 7,000 in sixty-seven TOP® clubs. TOP® implementation ended June 30, 2015, and the evaluation ended October 31, 2015.

Agencies implementing TOP® on behalf of DHH are Institute for Women and Ethnic Studies-New Orleans and surrounding parishes; Family Roads of Greater Baton Rouge-Greater Baton Rouge and surrounding parishes; Southwest Louisiana AHEC-Lafayette and surrounding parishes; Southwest Louisiana AIDs Council-Calcasieu and surrounding parishes; Volunteers of America-Alexandria-Rapides and surrounding parishes; Volunteers of America-Shreveport-Caddo and surrounding parishes; Louisiana Center Against Poverty-Ouachita and surrounding parishes

Youth are enrolled into a randomized control trial through active program and evaluation consent. All youth complete pre-, post-, and follow-up surveys at the indicated time period, with incentives. Daily evaluation requires completion of attendance and community service learning logs; along with the fidelity monitoring log. Monthly evaluation requires completion of a monthly activity report by all contractors. Quarterly evaluation includes completion of Wyman's

fidelity monitoring tool, webinars in which data is shared and discussed with contractors, and required participation in site visits and observations. Reach, dosage, fidelity and all performance measures are reported and monitored through OAH's federal reporting system at the required time periods throughout the year.

### **Family Planning Program-Clinical Services in Public Health Units**

In sixty-nine service sites statewide, men and women (including adolescents) receive education and counseling on contraception, STI risk, and family planning. Confidential and age-appropriate services are provided to adolescents. In 2014, 6,421 men and 35,630 women were served—6,850 adolescents (age 15-19). Clinic sites are evaluated in an annual federal report as well as regular quality assurance and improvement activities including targeted chart reviews, productivity reports (numbers served), and quarterly clinic flow analysis. In addition to these reports, an annual comprehensive site assessment is completed in the fall according to the federal Title X quality assurance tool.

### **Nurse-Family Partnership**

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a voluntary, free maternal and childhood health program for first-time mothers, from pregnancy until their babies are two years old, where mothers are paired with nurse home visitors. Expecting fathers are encouraged to participate in the visits, and families in the program have a 46% increase in father presence in the household. The Nurse-Family Partnerships program served 3,122 families in Federal FY 2015 (October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015). DHH administers this program with support from DCFS.

### **Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP)**

The STD/HIV Program was awarded federal funds through the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) to implement Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) across the state of Louisiana. Through PREP, FYSB awards grants to State agencies to educate young people in both abstinence and contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS.

PREP projects replicate effective, evidence-based program models or substantially incorporate elements of projects that have been proven to delay sexual activity, increase condom or contraceptive use for sexually active youth, or reduce pregnancy among youth. The program targets youth ages 10-19 who are homeless, in foster care, live in geographic areas with high teen birth rates, or come from racial or ethnic minority groups. The program also supports pregnancy youth and mothers under the age of 21.

As of September 30, 2015, over 2,100 youth have been reached through Louisiana State PREP.

Projects are currently running in seven regions statewide. The STD/HIV Program currently works with seven community based organizations across the state to provide two program models:

- **Project AIM** is a group level intervention for youth ages 11-14. Project AIM encourages young people to envision a positive possible future and discuss risk behaviors that could be a barrier to successful adulthood. This intervention is designed to reduce HIV, STD

and pregnancy risk behavior among youth. The Baton Rouge Black Alcoholism Council/Metro Health Education is implementing Project AIM in the Baton Rouge metro area.

- **Sisters Informing, Healing, Living and Empowering (SIHLE)** is a group level, peer-led, social skills training intervention aimed at reducing HIV risk behavior among African American teenage females, ages 14-18. SIHLE emphasizes ethnic and gender pride, healthy relationships, assertive communication, and enhances awareness of HIV risk reduction strategies. Six organizations are currently implementing SIHLE program statewide: the Greater Baton Rouge YWCA, Acadiana Cares in Lafayette, SWLA Center for Health Services in Lake Charles, Louisiana Prevention Training Center/Baton Rouge AIDS Society in Alexandria, The Philadelphia Center in Shreveport, The Philadelphia Center in Monroe and Face to Face Enrichment Center in Hammond. In the coming year, the Baton Rouge AIDS Society in Baton Rouge will begin implementing the SIHLE program as well.

### **School-Based Health Centers**

The Louisiana OPH/STD/HIV Program collaborates with School-Based Health Centers to provide trainings on STD/HIV screening as requested. In addition to offering trainings for the SBHC, the LA OPH/STD/HIV program also provides financial assistance to SBHC's by covering their laboratory costs for STI testing, treatment (for approximately 20 centers), and HIV test kits.

### **Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE), the Governors Abstinence Education Program**

The Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE), the Governors Abstinence Education Program, has partnered with Louisiana schools to implement the Choosing the Best Curriculum. Choosing the Best is an 8-hour abstinence based sex education program, which is being implemented in all 9 Public Health Regions in 20/64 Louisiana Parishes.

### **Louisiana Teen Pregnancy Prevention**

Louisiana Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition developed among OAH grantees in Louisiana-the Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies providing training and technical assistance to LPHI's teen pregnancy prevention program; Tulane University adapting the SiHLE program for electronic teen pregnancy prevention programming; LPHI implementing a clinic-based teen pregnancy prevention model; Central AHEC partnering with the La. National Guard to implement a youth challenge teen pregnancy prevention program.