



Juvenile  
Rehabilitation  
Administration

## Juvenile Justice & Rehabilitation Administration Juvenile Rehabilitation

### Enabling Washington Communities to Discuss Teen Sexual Health

The *Personal Responsibility Education Program* (PREP) works to reduce teen pregnancy rates. PREP offers education on abstinence, birth control, and adulthood preparation to youth. Those working on the program are excited to announce their collaboration with the Department of Health.

JR is offering PREP programs at several key sites, including Green Hill, Naselle, Touchstone and Twin Rivers. Youth facilities located in Ridgeview and Woodinville have also collaborated with community partners to incorporate PREP at their community-based sites. PREP sites receive training and curriculum directed toward delaying sexual activity and increasing the likelihood of condom use among sexually active youth.

PREP promotes open and candid exchanges about preventing teen pregnancies and sexual health risk factors. Several elements of PREP align with strategies promoted in *Teen Sense: Model Sexual Health Care Standards for Youth in State Custody*. PREP focuses on serving **high-risk youth**. Juvenile justice youth are among the top priority for PREP services. The partnership between JRA and PREP ensures that health programming will reach at-risk youth in a comprehensive and effective way.

Research conducted in this important area of preventative medicine shows that youth with inaccurate or missing information about sexuality and sexual risk behaviors may become sexually active at an earlier age than youth who have access to age-appropriate, accurate and relatively complete information. Early life stage pregnancy is both a cause and a result of poverty, and is associated with low academic success among teens. Teen pregnancy contributes to the “cycle of poverty” whereby very young mothers with few resources end up passing on low life expectations and self-limiting behaviors and norms to their children raised in adversity. Children of teen parents are at a substantially higher risk for teen pregnancy, poverty, and lower educational outcomes than other youth raised in more fortunate circumstances.

Currently there are 24 PREP partners widely distributed across Washington. Schools, detention facilities, community-based nonprofit organizations, and local public health jurisdictions are examples of current PREP partners.

For more information, visit the PREP website at [www.waprepforhealthyyouth.org](http://www.waprepforhealthyyouth.org) or contact Starcia Ague at [aguesm@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:aguesm@dshs.wa.gov)