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Whose Responsibility Is It?

Assessing the needs of Pregnant and Parenting Teens

Tanishia A. Johnson

State University of New York College at Brockport

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### Abstract

This study encompasses research that suggests the need for more supportive services within the national school

system for pregnant and parenting teens. This report further details the effectiveness of supportive services within an urban high school, located in western New York which provides on site supportive services for pregnant and parenting teens. The author has included a literature review which details current information on this topic. This report further includes the author's assessment of the teen parent program coordinated within the school by the YWCA and the results of a survey completed by program participants.

## Review of the Literature

*Teen Pregnancy Rates*

A review of the literature revealed that during the past decades, the incidence of teen pregnancy has increased in the United States (Porter, 1998). Approximately one million adolescents in the United States become pregnant each year (Porter, 1998). More recently, The Guttmacher Institute released a report in September 2006 that stated that the teen pregnancy rate among those who ever had intercourse declined 28% between 1990 and 2002. In addition to this, the report also summarized that the teenage pregnancy rate in this country is at its lowest level in 30 years, down 36% since its peak in 1990. Although these statistics are accurate, research consistently reveals that the United States has the highest teen pregnancy rate of any industrialized nation (State Education Agencies and Prevention, 2001). Here in Rochester, New York, there is still a serious problem with teen pregnancy. According to the Metro Council for Teen Potential (2006), in the City of Rochester, 8% of teen girls, ages 15-19, give birth each year. 633 babies were born in 2002 to teen mothers ages 15-19, in the City of Rochester, 18% of the babies born each year in the City of

Rochester are born to teen mothers. According to the Child Welfare League (1998), teen moms are less likely to finish high school and go on to college. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regularly publishes the *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System* (YRBS) that measures sexual behaviors, alcohol drug use, tobacco use and other behaviors. In 2001, the YRBS found that 4.7 % of students reported having been pregnant or having gotten pregnant in 2001. Currently, there is an abundance of information which outlines the teen pregnancy rates, causes for increases and declinations over the past several years and preventive measures surrounding this topic. Public attention is become increasingly focused on the problems and costs associated with adolescent pregnancy and parenting (Flynn, 1999).

#### *Programs for parenting teens*

While research is beginning to emerge in regards to the support teenagers receive after becoming pregnant, there continues to be a lack of information on the measures schools are taking to ensure the paternal and academic success of teen parents within their school system. There are many programs designed for teen parents however these programs are in most cases outside of the school setting. Specifically, research by MacGregor and Newlon (1987)

revealed that in 1984, a federally funded, adolescent program was implemented in Arizona County. Services for teen parents were provided in a health clinic for up to 2 years after their baby's birth (Macgregor & Newlon, 1987). Prenatal and parenting classes were held weekly for 21 weeks at 90 minutes each. The clients were 245 pregnant and parenting teens between the ages of 13-19 years old and of low income. These teen parents were either drop outs and/or current students who were not receiving supportive services within their school (MacGregor & Newlon, 1987).

According to Bunting and McAuley (2004) the literature on social support of teen parents is nowhere near as extensive as that of family support. Their research concludes that research has been neglected in terms of supportive services by a means other than that of the family. The State Education Agencies and Prevention (SEAS), 2001 reported that next to parents, schools play the second most important role in preventing teen pregnancy and providing supportive services. The report further states that approximately one-third of the women who become teen mothers have dropped out of school. More recently reports have discussed the need for comprehensive services within the schools for pregnant and parenting teens. Amin Ruhl (2006) reported that many alternative school based

comprehensive programs have been established in the United States. The results of his study revealed that program participants were more likely to have higher educational aspiration, better reproductive health outcomes, higher contraceptive use and more breast-feeding practice and intention than those of their non-participating counterparts (Ruhl, 2006).

Williams and Sadler(2001) noted that for adolescent parents, early childbearing has been associated with decreased likelihood of school completion and advanced education, and decreased likelihood of future employment and subsequent greater dependence on public assistance. In addition to this, the researchers further discussed that approximately 30-50% of all adolescent mothers have a second pregnancy, and about 25% have a repeat birth within 2 years(Williams & Sadler, 2001). They continued to report that string evidence suggests that many of the problems associated with adolescent pregnancy and parenting can be diminished by social support and school-based programs that provide counseling, healthcare, health teaching and education about child development to young parents(Williams and Sadler, 2001).

*The need for school-based support services*

Williams and Sadler (2001) conducted a study to test the effectiveness of an urban high school based child care center in New Haven, Connecticut. The basis of this test was to look at the outcome variables of school attendance, grade point averages, high school completion or continuation and repeat childbirth rates. The parents were enrolled students at the Wilbur Cross High School who had to regularly attend school and participate in scheduled classes. In addition to this, they had to take a daily parent education class and spend an hour each week in the day care center where they participated in parenting skills, workshops under the direction of the day care staff members (Williams & Sadler, 2001). There was a cohort of 52 adolescent parents and their children were selected based on various criteria. The length of time for the study was 4 academic quarters or 1.5 years. The result of this study showed improved GPA's and as attendance declined grades improved. In addition to this, the study further showed no repeat births were reported for the adolescent parents throughout the entire period of the study. An overall success rate of 100% was found for high school graduates or continuation for student parents who remained enrolled at the school during the period of study. Lastly, of the children who were enrolled in the child care center, 94%

were up to date with physical examinations and 90% were up to date with immunizations of their age group (Williams & Sadler, 2001). Nath, Borkowski, Whitman and Schellenbach (1991) reported that the amount of support for teen mothers is critical. They furthered stated that on-going social support is crucial to the well being of adolescent mother and child (Nath, et.al.)

Bergman(2004) completed a study involving a 15 year old pregnant adolescent who felt a lack of support from teachers and school administration and as a result hid her pregnancy. Upon her mom discovering a school in Canada which had an on-site day care, support teachers, school administration and an abundance of teen parenting resources, she was transferred to this school. Bergman summarizes that within this school structure the teachers were more understanding of the unique pressures parenting teens are under and as a result respond appropriately which in turn leads to the students' success(Bergman,2004). As a result, some students who used to fail became honor students, including Melissa, the adolescent he encountered while completing this study. Bergman concluded that the support within a school such as this is evidence that supportive services in the school system are a benefit to teen parents.

Literature by Kiselica and Pfaller (1993) discussed the role of school counselors in counseling adolescent parents. Noting the rise in school-based and community service programs for teen parents, the authors urged school counselors to play a direct role in helping this population through the provision of career, educational and personal counseling. Within this literature the responsibility is shifted to that of the school counselor in an effort to provide additional support to parenting teens. Although there are an abundance of social support systems for this population, there is evidence that also points to the fact because much attention is being placed on teen pregnancy, the community is also responsible for failing the teen parents because their needs are not being addressed, specifically in schools. According to Waller, Brown and Whittle(1999), because this is societal view is apparent; it would appear that once a girl becomes pregnant, she is dropped from the world agenda. The authors' view is that mentoring is a bridge to positive outcomes for teen mothers and their children. They state that the most important benefit of mentoring programs for pregnant and parenting teens is a social support, a key factor in positive adaptational outcomes. The article goes on to suggest guidelines for establishing a mentoring program for teen

parents within schools and community agencies. The purpose of this program would be for mentors to commit a time to their mentee. During this time, the mentor would provide information on prenatal care, labor and delivery, child development, child management, family violence, stress management, coping skills, interpersonal skills, and accessing community resources. All mentors would complete an intense 7 week training which would combine didactic information, group discussion, role play, audiovisual material and presentations by health care professionals and representatives of community agencies (Waller, et.al. 1999).

*Teen Fathers weigh in on supportive services*

The research above mainly depicts programs and services for teen mothers; one has wonder about the support of teen fathers within a school setting. Few articles focus on the experiences of the father and current research does not address the needs of this population (Anthony & Smith, 1994). Real World High School in Denver, Colorado has a teenage parent program which began during the 1989-1990 academic year. Master of Social Work students in field placement carried the primary responsibility for program development and implementation (Anthony & Smith, 1994). In the initial study the program provided both

group and individual counseling; adolescent fathers and mothers met in separate groups on a weekly basis. The purposes of the meetings were to provide support and parenting education, to offer motivation to stay in school, and to encourage prevention of future premature pregnancies. The result of their study was that the male teen parents showed significant improvement in their academic, increased rate of attendance at school and increased involvement in their child's life (Anthony & Smith, 1994).

Baret and Robinson (1982) over a decade earlier that adolescent fathers had been neglected too long especially within the context of school and community support. The research pointed out that most articles, resources and other programs specifically identified the teen mother as being an eligible participant. They also concluded that by and large, the research on teenage fathers was not helpful due to their shortcoming and biased samples. Almost 2 decades later we are still discovering more supportive services for teen fathers but not within the context of the school system. We have seen an increase in the number of teen pregnancy prevention programs for males. In 2005, Brindis, Barenbaum, Sanchez-Flores, McCarter and Chand wrote an article on the California Male Improvement Program

developed in 1995. It represented the first statewide effort to mobilize adolescent and young adult males to prevent teenage pregnancy and unintended fatherhood. In conclusion, there continues to be a lack of research detailing school support for both male and female teen parents.

## Method

### *Setting*

The research was conducted within a large urban inner city educational campus. This educational campus consists of 3 smaller schools within the building. Floors 1 through 3 are the locations of each school separated by specialty. The population of students on the campus is close to 1500 (approximately 500 students in each school). As reported by its' District, this school ranks #1 in the reported numbers of teen pregnancy. The campus houses a student child care center located on the main level. In addition to this, there is a student support services center located in the building. This office houses several different agencies which provide various resources including but not limited to: emergency housing, counseling, assistance with food and clothing, mentorship opportunities, support groups and teen parent support services. In terms of the school

district, it is comprised of 34,000 students from pre-kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade and an additional 15,000 adult students in continuing education programs. It operates 39 elementary schools, 16 secondary schools, one adult/family learning center, and several alternative education programs.

The ethnic makeup of the student population is 64 percent African American, 20 percent Hispanic, 14 percent white, and 2 percent Native American, Asian, and other minorities. There are 35 different languages spoken within the student population. Like many large urban districts across the country, this district faces a number of challenges that impact student achievement. Among these is pervasive poverty. While the District is ranked 73rd in the nation in size, the city of Rochester is 11th in the nation in child poverty. Eighty percent of this District's students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch based on family income. High student mobility, increased requirements for accountability despite limited resources, and greater numbers of students from single-parent and non-English-speaking families are other challenges facing this district and its counterparts nationally.

*Procedure*

In an effort to determine if the needs of parenting and pregnant teens were being addressed within the school, the counselor intern attended a series of support group meetings held bi-weekly on Fridays, by the YWCA Young Parent's Support Services within the urban high school. The goal in achieving this was for the counselor intern to attend 3 meetings in an effort to explain and provide the survey. Additionally, the goal was for the counselor intern to identify areas for implementation and/or strategies that would be effective for the teen mothers in addressing their needs. The purpose of the survey was to determine if the teen mothers thought their needs were being met in regards to academic support, emotional support and parenting support. Prior to attending the meetings, a letter explaining the desire to achieve this was forwarded to the Director of the YWCA Young Mother's Program within the high school. A statement of informed consent was provided in September 2006 to all participants (see Appendix A) and informed consents were also provided to those teen parents under the age of 18 whom needed parental consent to participate in the survey (see Appendix B). Following the completion of the consent forms by mid September 2006, the surveys were provided to all participants (see Appendix C). Additional copies of surveys and consent forms were

provided to the agency representative for participants that were absent at the time of distribution.

### *Evaluation*

A drop box was provided in the counselor intern office during the hours the counselor intern's office was staffed. Surveys were locked and stored in a file cabinet in the counselor intern's office at the end of each business day. An anonymous survey was utilized for confidentiality reasons and to provide full disclosure of opinions by participants. Upon receiving the completed surveys, the counselor intern organized the data and began her assessment of the data collected. In October 2006 the counselor intern received a total of 20 surveys from 20 teen mothers in receipt of services from the YWCA Young Mother's Support Group. Each survey was documented with a chart based on how each participant responded to each question. The counselor intern checked each answer and proceeded to document similarities and discrepancies.

### Results

The anonymous survey completed by the participants indicated the following (based on each question):

**Question 1)** 16 of the 20 participants strongly agreed/agreed that they felt supported by the school

administration. 4 of the 20 participants either strongly disagreed/disagreed

**Question 2)** 18 of the 20 participants agreed or strongly agreed that the after school teen mother support programs. 2/20 participants strongly disagreed/disagreed with this statement.

**Question 3)** 14 of the 20 participants strongly agreed/agreed that they received information on topics that interested within the support group meetings. 6 of the 20 participants strongly disagreed/disagreed with this statement.

**Question 4)** 9 of the 20 participants strongly disagreed/disagreed that they do not know about resources available to them as teen parents. 11 of the 20 participants strongly agreed/agreed with this statement.

**Question 5)** 8 of the 20 participants strongly disagreed that school administration have nit provided them with options that would assist them in their academic growth as a teen parent. 12 of the 20 strongly agreed/agreed with this statement.

**Question 6)** 7 of the 20 participants strongly disagreed that school administration have not support them with options that would assist them as teen parents with their emotional

growth. 13 of the 20 participants strongly agreed/agreed with this statement.

**Question 7)** 17 of the 20 participants strongly disagreed/disagreed that the YWCA does not support their career goals. 3 of the 20 participants strongly agreed/agreed with this statement.

**Question 8)** 13 of the 20 participants answered the question in regards to the workshops they would like to see offered by the YWCA teen mom support group: 6 of the 13 would like to see programs in regards to caring for their baby, 1 of the 13 would be interested in workshops addressing sexually transmitted diseases. 4 of the 13 would like to see programs/workshops in regards to job opportunities for teen parents. 1 of the 13 would be interested in workshops addressing additional resources in the community. 7 of the 20 did not answer this question.

**Question 9)** 16 of the 20 participants answered the question in regards to what they would like to see the school offer in an effort to be successful in school: 12 of the 16 participants would like to see the school offer more space for the child care center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. 3 of the 16 participants would like to see job postings offered by the school. 1 of the 16 participants would like the school to have college/career fairs tailored for teen parents.

**Question 10)** 18 of the 20 participants strongly agreed/agreed that they felt optimistic about completing high school. 2 of the 20 participants strongly disagreed/disagreed with this statement.

#### Discussion

##### *Effectiveness of support services*

The results provided in this study further supports the hypothesis of the effectiveness of supportive services within the school for teen parents. Based on the literature by The State Education Agencies and Prevention (SEAS), 2001, the schools' role is critical in providing supportive services for its students. The results of this study suggest that over 75% of the teen parents, who participated in the survey, feel supported by the school administration as well as the YWCA Young Parent Support Services within the school. The results also reflect over 80 % of the participants being overall satisfied with the services they are receiving within the Young Mother's Support Group. The results further show the effectiveness of these supportive services within school based on the high percentage of participants who agreed with the workshop and presentations offered within the Young Parent Support Services. The results of the survey are also consistent with research by Williams and Adler (2001) who concluded that many of the

problems associated with adolescent parenting can be diminished by school based programs which provide counseling and other educational services. There was a high percentage of participants who felt optimistic about completing high school. Although this was a finding, it was also discovered that a low percentage of participants feel emotionally supported by the school administration; however a high percentage of participants who felt academically supported by administration.

*Additional services needed*

Another important piece of information revealed in this survey was the overwhelming number (of participants who would like to see additional child caring workshops offered by the YWCA. This proves that although the services are being provided by the YWCA, there is a desire to have additional workshops that will assist these young mothers with caring for their child. Additionally, about 75% of the participants also desire information on jobs (either through the YWCA Young Parent Program) or provided by the school. Lastly, the need for more support in terms of child care was relevant in the results of this survey. About 85% of the participants shared their desire to see more space being accommodated for their child care need. It is important to note that within the Franklin

Educational Campus there is a child care center located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. This child care center is free to students however staff may also utilize this center if needed. At this time, per the Director of the child care center, there is a long waiting list of close to 30 teen mothers who are seeking services through this child care center. When the counselor intern attended one of the support group meetings, it was a consensus that while the service is available it is not accessible due to the waiting list. The director shared with the group that this is due to the large number of teen parents within the school campus (total of 1500 students in the building) and the increased number of teen pregnancies.

#### *Implementation*

Ideas for implementation include workshops that the teen mothers were interested in learning more about in terms of parenting their children; Additionally the teen parents have a large concern with quality child care and it would be helpful for the YWCA Young Mother's Support Services to look into various child care centers (public or home) where referrals can be made to their participants. In the long run, this may assist with securing long term academic benefits for the teen parents. As the research shows, there is a correlation between effective services

for teen parents within schools and academic success. Assisting these teen parents with their child care challenges would increase their attendance in school and would give them a sense of "peace of mind" while they are attending classes.

Lastly, further research is suggested in the area of teen fathers. Although the YWCA provides teen parent services, fathers are excluded from the additional resources (ex: support groups) and benefits teen mothers are receiving. There is no evidence of a teen father support group; additionally it was difficult to provide this survey to them because it was a challenge to identify who the teen fathers were due to the biased resources available to teen mothers within the school. The research clearly states a need for this to happen in order for teen parents, both mothers and fathers can receive services in school which will enhance their emotional, academic and parental development.

#### *Limitations of the survey*

There were several limitations to the survey. First, the survey needed to have more open ended questions. The survey utilized by the counselor intern was brief and presented challenges in terms of interpreting information. Due to this limitation, the researcher was unable to draw

additional conclusions due to the lack of information. For example, having more open-ended questions, would have presented the opportunity for more feedback in terms of the services participants needed and additional resources available in the community. Additionally, within this study there are only two opportunities for the participants to provide information beyond the scale provided. Another example of the limitation in the survey can be seen in question 10. This question asks if the student feels optimistic completing high school. In this question, perhaps a follow-up question would have been helpful in determining the reasoning for the participants' answer. Depending on the feedback provided by the participants, further implementations could have been suggested. Another limitation of the survey was seen in the amount of surveys returned; a larger sample would have been helpful in terms of achieving a broader range of information and feedback. The participants in this study were only 20 of many other teen parents from within the school. In order to have a better understanding of the services needed, surveying an additional 20 or more participants would assist in this effort. Having a larger sample participate in the study would provide more feedback on how the participants assess the school administration's support of them. A larger

sample would have also provided an opportunity to discover additional ideas and services teen parents are interested in the school providing. There were 20 surveys collected and reviewed; the majority of the sample held the same ideas in terms of supportive services needed. A larger sample may have drawn out several more ideas. Feedback provide by one of the YWCA case managers was that when their agency requests surveys, they often provide an incentive to capture more information. The case manager suggested that the numbers of the surveys returned may have doubled if there was an incentive. Lastly, in a future study, utilizing a more comprehensive survey with more simplified statements would be helpful for interpretation of results. There were various surveys which had information left blank or misunderstood by the participant. This was due to the complexity of the questions. Question 8 offered examples of what the researcher was looking for as an answer; Question 9 did not provide examples and left room for the question being answered in a way that was not intended by the researcher. The wording of some of the questions allowed the participants to change answers because it was not understood. For example: "The YWCA after school support group for teen moms does not support my career goals." Another way this question could have been

asked without confusion would have been: "I do/do not think the YWCA supports my career goals" In the aforementioned question, several participants crossed out one or two answers; this would leave one to believe that the question was complex.

#### *Implications for counselors*

Based on the literature by Kiselica and Pfaller(1993), the implications this research suggests for school counselors, is in the way in which teen parents are counseled within the school system. The authors urged school counselor s to play a direct role in helping the teen parent population. School Counselors may accomplish this by providing career, educational and personal counseling. School Counselors are encouraged to assess the needs of teen parents in their school. Programs and resources which are available in the community should be made available by school counselors who will encounter students with teen parenting needs. In addition to this, schools counselors must stay consistently informed of updated resources that are available in the community that provide parenting, academic, housing and other services. There are various programs that can be implemented within the school by the counselors. The mentoring program discussed in the literature review is one that has a proven record of success and can be implemented

within any school system. Training can be provided by various community agencies and individuals who are facilitating mentorship programs throughout the community. Other opportunities for school counselors would be to provide tutoring services to teen parents, collaborate with community based agencies within the school system that can provide additional support and information on other resources. Lastly, schools that do not have supportive services in place for teen parents should review the various models which have demonstrated success rates throughout the nation. School Counselors have the ability to approach their districts to seek out services for their teen parent population. The goal is for school counselors to become well versed in being able to effectively advocate for the needs of their students. The information provided in this research can further assist school counselors in the planning of workshops for teen parents. Oftentimes, the school counselor is seen as the "guidance counselor" which leads many students to believe that school counselors are not equipped with the information they need outside of academics. School Counselors can collaborate with the community agencies in an effort to bring additional services within the school for their teen parents. Additionally, School Counselors can plan workshops and or

in-services to educate the school administration on the services needed for the teen parent population. It would be helpful for school counselors to provide materials to teachers, secretaries, principals and other school administration in an effort to bring awareness to the lack of support some students reported as being an issue for them. Within this school, school counselors in this setting would benefit from on-going counseling as well. This school is reported by its' district as having the highest teen pregnancy/teen parenting rate as reported by the district. School Counselors whom educate themselves regarding this issue would be better equipped with assisting these students who often resort to dropping out because they feel ignored or unsupported in their goals. In the western New York community, there are various opportunities for school counselors to attend seminars, workshops, and community agency fairs where information is provided on how to effectively work with this population.

### *Conclusions*

The result of the research and survey conducted led me to several conclusions. First, I became aware of the lack of support within the school (and community) for teen fathers. As documented earlier by Barrett and Robinson (1982), there is a lack of information in terms of identifying teen

fathers in the school, providing resources and this includes outside resources as well. In the future, I would like to further my research by exploring this area in more depth. My research at this point concludes that this population (teen fathers) is often ignored as part of a social problem as opposed to a population in need of supportive services as well. In addition to this, my research concludes that having supportive services within the school is beneficial to students. The overwhelming majority of the participants attested to this fact. The services provided (child care, tutoring, housing, counseling, parent classes, support groups, etc) are indicative of why over 95 % of those surveyed felt optimistic about completing high school. Schools that do not provide teen parent support services may in fact be contributing to the problem with the high drop out rate amongst teen parents (SEAS, 2001).

Lastly, the fact remains that there is still a large need of research to continue in terms of assessing the needs of teen parents and providing services outside and within the school. In the end parents, schools, school districts, community agencies and the community as a whole should continue to seek out services and funding for the teen parent population. In this you have the answer to the

undying question "Whose responsibility is it?" The answer:  
Everyone.

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Appendix A

**Statement of Informed Consent**

Dear Student:

My name is Tanishia Johnson and I am a graduate student pursuing a Master's Degree in Counselor Education at Brockport. The purpose of this research project is to complete a thesis/project as a graduate requirement for a degree in Counselor Education from the State University of New York College at Brockport

Franklin High School currently has a young mothers' support group staffed by the YWCA for teen moms and those that are pregnant. The purpose of this research project would be to determine if the needs of these young mothers' are being accommodated within this program.

In order to participate in this study, your informed consent is required. You are being asked to make a decision as to whether or not you would like to participate. If you want to participate in the project, and agree with the statements below, please sign below. You may change your mind at any time and leave the study without penalty, even after the study has began.

I understand that:

1. My participation is voluntary and I have the right to refuse to answer any questions.
2. My confidentiality is guaranteed. There will be no way to connect my response to me. My name will not be written on the survey. If any publication results from this research I will not be identified by name.

3. There will be no anticipated personal risk or benefits because of my participation in the project.
4. My participation involves reading and answering survey of 10 questions, which will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.
5. Approximately 20-25 people will take part in this study. The results will be used for the completion of a thesis at SUNY Brockport.
6. Data will be kept in a secured, locked filing cabinet in a locked office in the Counseling Office at Franklin High School. All consent forms and surveys will be shredded at the end of the Fall 2006 semester.
7. This research is not a part of any regular school program and is not being conducted by the school, and my participation will not affect my grades.

If you have questions you may contact:

Faculty Advisors: Dr. Susan Seem (585) 395-2258  
sseem@brockport.edu  
Dr. Tom Hernandez (585) 395-5498  
[thernandez@brockport.edu](mailto:thernandez@brockport.edu)

On-Site Supervisor: Tonya Dickens-Johnson, MEd  
(585) 324-3730

Student Researcher: Tanishia A. Johnson  
(585) 278-0132

Signature of Consent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Appendix B

**Statement of Informed Consent**

Dear Parents:

My name is Tanishia Johnson and I am a graduate student pursuing a Master's Degree in Counselor Education at Brockport. The purpose of this research project is to complete a thesis/project as a graduate requirement for a degree in Counselor Education from the State University of New York College at Brockport. The purpose of this research project is also to assess the opinion of pregnant and parenting teens within Franklin High School.

Franklin High School currently has a young mother's support group staffed by the YWCA for teen moms and those that are expecting. Furthermore, the purpose of this research project would be to determine if the needs of these young mothers' are being addressed by the current young mothers' support group operated by the YWCA.

This research is being conducted by taking an anonymous survey of those participants in the YWCA young mothers'

support group. This survey will be utilized to determine what additional resources can be added to the support group program and to the school. The goal is to determine the way in which teen parents are being supported by the school and whether or not services need to be implemented or expanded.

In order for your child to participate in this study, your informed consent is required. You are being asked to make a decision as to whether or not your daughter can participate. If you want your daughter to participate in the project, and agree with the statements below, please sign below. You may change your mind at any time and withdraw your child from the study without penalty, even after the study has began.

I understand that:

1. My daughter's participation is voluntary and she has the right to refuse to answer any questions.
2. My daughter's confidentiality is guaranteed. There will be no way to connect responses to her. My daughter's name will not be written on the survey. If any publication results from this research she will not be identified by name.
3. There will be no anticipated personal risk or benefits because of my daughter's participation in the project.
4. My daughter's participation involves reading and answering a survey of 10 questions, which will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.
5. Approximately 20-25 people will take part in this study. The results will be used for the completion of a thesis at SUNY Brockport.
6. Data will be kept in a secured, locked filing cabinet in a locked office in the Counseling Office at Franklin High School. All consent forms and surveys will be shredded at the end of the Fall 2006 semester.
7. This research is not a part of any regular school program and is not being conducted by the school, and my daughter's participation will not affect her grades.

I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ . I have read and understand the above statements. All my questions about my daughter's participation in this study

have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to my daughter's participation in this study, realizing she may withdraw without penalty at any time during the process. Completion of this form indicates my consent to my daughter's participation.

If you have questions you may contact:

Faculty Advisors: Dr. Susan Seem (585) 395-2258  
sseem@brockport.edu  
Dr. Tom Hernandez (585) 395-5498  
[thernandez@brockport.edu](mailto:thernandez@brockport.edu)

On-Site Supervisor: Tonya Dickens-Johnson, MSEd  
(585) 324-3730

Student Researcher: Tanishia A. Johnson  
(585) 278-0132

Signature of Consent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Survey for Participants

**Please note: Survey was created by student researcher, Tanishia Johnson**

1. As a teen parent, I feel supported by the school administration (teachers, counselors, Vice-Principal, Principal, other staff).

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

2. The YWCA after school teen mother support group program offers services that meet my needs.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

3. During support group meetings, I receive information on topics that interest me as a teen mom.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

4. I do not know about the various resources available to me as a teen mom.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

5. School administration (teachers, counselors, Vice-Principal, Principal, other staff) have not provided me with options that would assist me in my academic growth as a teen parent.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

6. School administration (teachers, counselors, Vice-Principal, Principal, other staff) have not provided me with options that would assist me in my emotional growth as a teen parent.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

7. The YWCA after school support group for teen moms does not support my career goals

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree

8. If the YWCA after school teen mom support group offered a workshop on \_\_\_\_\_, I would find this helpful.

(For example: parenting classes, resources in the community, etc.)

9. If the school offered

\_\_\_\_\_, to teen moms  
I would find this to be helpful and would feel supported  
in my efforts to complete school.

10. I feel optimistic about completing high school.

Strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly agree