

## **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Research Evidence Review**

### **Call for Studies**

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: OCTOBER 31, 2009**

#### **PURPOSE**

Mathematica Policy Research seeks studies for a comprehensive review of the evidence base for programs to prevent teen pregnancy. The review is being conducted for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) by Mathematica Policy Research and will be used to help inform policy and new initiatives and program directions at the federal level. Submissions are due by October 31, 2009.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The consequences of adolescent sexual activity remain a troubling issue in the U.S. After a steady decline since the early 1990s, the teen birth rate increased in 2006 to almost 42 births per 1,000 females 15 to 19 years of age, up from 40.5 the year before. Preliminary data for 2007 show the upward trend continuing. Nationwide, about half of high school students have had sexual intercourse, and more than 20 percent report having had four or more partners by graduation. In 2007, over 38 percent of sexually active high school students had not used a condom during their last sexual intercourse. These behaviors increase the risks of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Young people 15 to 24 years old account for half of the 19 million new STD cases, and about 13 percent of new HIV/AIDS cases, in the U.S. every year.

To identify the strategies most effective in reducing teen pregnancy, on behalf of ACF, Mathematica is conducting a comprehensive review of the evidence base for teen pregnancy prevention programs. The review will focus on studies of programs that may reduce teen pregnancy, delay sexual activity, improve contraception use (without increasing sexual activity), reduce the transmission of sexually transmitted infections, or reduce other sexual risk behaviors. Programs studied may take a range of approaches, such as including youth development components, e.g., service learning, academic support, or opportunities to participate in sports and the arts; providing information on contraception and comprehensive sex education; and emphasizing abstinence and encouraging teens to wait to have sex.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

This call for studies is particularly aimed at identifying unpublished manuscripts (past or recent), conference papers, or new publications (currently in press) that are *not* included in existing research syntheses and databases. Apart from this call for studies, Mathematica will be conducting a comprehensive literature search of existing research syntheses and databases, including (1) Kirby's *Emerging Answers 2007* report, (2) the 2006 review conducted by Scher et al. for the Campbell Collaboration, (3) the 2008 *Science and Success* report by Advocates for Youth, (4) the 2008 review of abstinence education programs by the Heritage Foundation, (5) the CDC's HIV/STD Prevention Research Synthesis (PRS) project, and (6) the Child Trends LINKS database. The literature search will also involve keyword searches of electronic databases (e.g.

MEDLINE, PsycINFO, Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials, PubMed, SocINDEX) and searches for studies on websites of research and policy organizations with links to teen pregnancy and STD prevention, among other activities. All relevant studies from these reports and databases will be included in the review.

Studies submitted in response to this call should:

- Assess the effectiveness of an intervention using quantitative data and statistical analyses. Qualitative studies describing the implementation of a program or correlation risk-factor analyses will not be part of this review.
- Focus on U.S.-based programs targeted to youth through age 19.
- Have been conducted or published in 1989 or later.
- Provide a detailed description of the intervention being evaluated, as well as the study methods employed.
- Include at least one of the following outcomes: sexual activity (e.g., initiation, age at initiation, contraceptive use, or number of partners); pregnancy, birth, or STD rates; or knowledge, attitudes, or beliefs related to teen sexual activity, pregnancy, or STD risk. Studies with behavioral outcomes will be reviewed first; studies focusing on knowledge, attitudes, or beliefs will be reviewed time and resources permitting.

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Submissions should be e-mailed to:

[PPRER@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:PPRER@mathematica-mpr.com)

It is suggested that submissions include:

1. An electronic version of the study in MS Word or PDF format.
2. A cover e-mail noting contact information for the lead or corresponding author, the intervention being evaluated, the study design (e.g., experimental or quasi-experimental with a comparison group), and whether the key outcome measures are behaviors, knowledge, and/or attitudes.

**The deadline for submissions is October 31, 2009.**

Authors will receive acknowledgment of receipt of their submission but no indication of the possible inclusion of their study in the review. A report summarizing the review is expected to be released in 2010.