

NYSCAP

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Nationwide RISE in STD Rates

***STDs continue rapid rise in U.S.,
setting new record, CDC says...***

Sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise in America, according to new data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In fact, nearly 2.3 million cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis were diagnosed in the U.S. in 2017, surpassing the record set in 2016 by more than 200,000. Experts say many factors have contributed to the rapid rise, though the biggest one may be less frequent condom use. Another factor driving the skyrocketing numbers of STD cases may be a decline in funding for state and local agencies working on prevention efforts and education.

This national article further explains the importance of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and how CSE gives youth the tools they need to make safe and healthy decisions about their lives, their bodies, their relationships or their well-being. [Italics ours. Abstract provided by publisher.]

Click here for more information:
<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/sexual-health/stds-continue-rapid-rise-u-s-setting-new-record-cdc-n904311>

Welcome To The Team!!

NYSCAP is excited to welcome Anthony Zeniuk to the NYSCAP Board of Directors. Anthony, who prefers to be called Tony, has a great deal of experience and is excited to join the NYSCAP team. Introducing Tony:

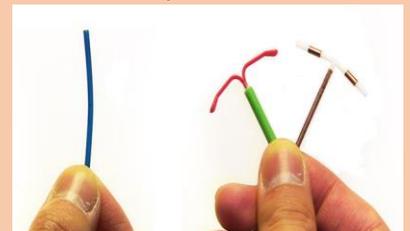
“I currently work for Erie 2 BOCES, as a Prevention Education Specialist, which is located in Fredonia, New York. As a Prevention Education Specialist my main job responsibility is to instruct Sexuality Education to students in grades 5 – 12, in a program named Project KNOW. I have been providing sexuality instruction for the past 10 years. I am a certified OLWEUS Bullying Prevention Program trainer, DASA trainer, and perform other professional development trainings. I have presented at the National Adapted Physical Education Conference in San Diego, California and the National SHAPE America conference in Nashville, Tennessee. I am the Recreation Director in the Town of Boston, New York, where I reside. I hold a master’s degree in physical education from Canisius College. In my spare time I enjoy being with my wife Kathy, and my three daughters, Alyssa, Ava and Audrey. I also enjoy the outdoors, fishing, hunting and hiking, as well as cooking and gardening.”

What’s New With LARC in Rochester?

The City of Rochester has been challenged by high rates of teen pregnancy for generations, and the City, the Rochester City School District, youth-serving agencies and funders have committed to using evidence-based strategies that reach large numbers of youth, to address this problem.

These efforts have been very successful, but the rate of teen births in Rochester in 2016 was still almost 2.5 times the NYS teen birth rate.

In response to high teen birth rates, a new initiative, the Greater Rochester Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) Initiative, launched in 2014. This community-level program is supported by a grant from the Greater Rochester Health Foundation and is coordinated through the



Hoekelman Center in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Rochester Medical Center. The initial partners were: Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York, Highland Family Planning, and the Metro Council for Teen Potential.

Recognizing that adolescents were often discouraged from trying the most effective types of contraception, the team set out to educate adults— health care providers, teachers, and community-based staff — about highly effective forms of contraception for young people, specifically LARC. LARC methods include the intrauterine device and the contraceptive implant.

The LARC Initiative provides one-hour educational presentations to these groups of adults in order to prepare them to have conversations about pregnancy prevention and birth control with the young people they serve. These trusted adults play an important role in the lives of young people, and the LARC initiative team members equip them with the most up-to-date medically accurate information about birth control methods. Each LARC Talk covers the safety, effectiveness, and availability of no-cost, confidential LARC and other family planning services in Rochester. In addition to the LARC talks, the team has facilitated health provider training in LARC insertion and has encouraged clinics to enroll in the Family Planning Benefit Program.

In September 2018, a complementary health awareness marketing campaign was rolled out in Rochester. The campaign is called *Stay True to You* and is led by Causewave Community Partners, and supported by a grant from the Wilson Foundation. A group of nearly 20 community partners worked together to develop this media campaign aimed at reducing unplanned pregnancy in teens and young adult women in Rochester. The campaign promotes awareness of all of the available methods of contraception and directs consumers to a website where they can find information about each method and the health centers that offer birth control for free.

For more information about the LARC Initiative and Stay True to You, visit the website at www.LARC.urmc.edu.
Written by Jessica Cranch, Health Project Coordinator for the LARC Initiative.

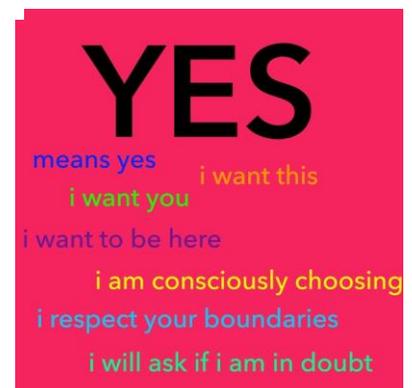
Adding Consent to the Conversation...

Going further than "yes" mean "yes"

Affirmative or enthusiastic consent is the idea that consent goes further past the initial ‘yes’ and is shown by partner engagement and enthusiasm. Consent is about checking in with your sexual partner and acknowledging their sexual and emotional signals. Many sexual health educators today are using evidence-based curricula to teach comprehensive sexuality education. Most of these have youth practice condom negotiation and refusal skills with activities that teach youth how to resist pressures of unsafe or unwanted sex. While this skill is vital, some wonder if we continually only teach refusal skills, will this give youth the impression that sexual pressure is normal or to be expected? Teaching both refusal skills and Affirmative Consent gives youth a variety of tools to make healthy choices about sexual behaviors and communicate effectively about boundaries and desires.

In Western culture, males have historically been tasked with the role of the asserter – they are given the power to initiate. Females have been assigned the role of sexual gatekeeper - the power to grant or deny access to sex. At the intersection of these roles is affirmative sexual consent: the act of granting or denying permission to engage in sexual activity. When educating youth on Affirmative Consent some may feel that obtaining consent feels unnatural or “kills the mood”, but with CSE education youth will learn how Affirmative Consent can improve communication within relationships, intimacy and sexuality. Couples of all genders and orientations who practice Affirmative Consent often describe it as liberating, bringing more joy and excitement to romantic sexual encounters. They like knowing that their partner is enjoying the moment.

Cited from ETR Teaching Affirmative Consent Supplemental Training



NYSCAP ADVOCACY EFFORTS

NYSCAP continues to closely monitor proposals and budgets, and advocated this year on the following:

- In January, NYSCAP sent a letter to SED Commissioner MaryEllen Elia and Regents Chancellor Betty Rosa, urging them to apply for a Center for Disease Control (CDC) **grant** (\$350,000 annually, over a 5-year period) to improve student health. Regrettably, SED responded that it was not able to bring this to the top of their priority list, given their “extremely limited time and resources.”
- In response to the State Education Department (SED) **proposed regulatory change** to create a new, temporary teaching certificate to allow certain licensed health professionals to teach health education, NYSCAP sent a Letter of OPPOSITION to SED’s Commissioner and all members of the Board of Regents, including the Chancellor. NYSCAP cited the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model (WSCC), Healthy 2020 objectives, and New York Teaching Standards, pointing out that this proposal flies in the face of these *and* existing research on what constitutes effective teaching. NYSCAP also provided information to the Sexuality Education Alliance of New York City (SEANYC) while crafting its own letter of opposition, and a sample draft letter on this issue was provided to participants at NYSCAP’s Annual Symposium in April. The State Education Department received so many comments that they were still being reviewed throughout the summer. At this time, the proposal has been put on hold; and there are no plans for presenting it to the Board of Regents. **NYSCAP is very grateful for the help we received from supporting organizations working on this issue, and to everyone who submitted comments.**
Thank you for your excellent advocacy!
- NYSCAP Board Members visited the offices of 12 **elected representatives** on March 6th in **Albany**. We discussed the critical need for quality comprehensive sexuality and health education in New York State, and distributed informational packets that included our White Papers on both of these topics. In addition, we advocated that funding for teen pregnancy prevention and maternal-child health programs be maintained at their current levels in the state budget. At their request, NYSCAP followed up and sent these officials other items, such as YRBS data and the National Sexuality Teaching Standards, as well as SED’s response letter regarding the CDC grant (above).



**Local Highlights **

If you have an Evidence-based-or-Informed Comprehensive Sexuality Education program, School District success story, or a proven Best Practice that you would like to be highlighted in the NYSCAP Newsletter, Please email: NYSCAPCoordinator@gmail.com

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