

## **PREGNANCY PREVENTION INTERVENTION IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

### **Program Name:**

*Children's Aid Society- Carrera Program*

### **Developer(s):**

Michael A. Carrera, M.D.; Patricia Dempsey

### **Program Description and Overview**

The *Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program* uses a long term, holistic approach to empower youth, to help them develop personal goals and the desire for a productive future, in addition to developing their sexual literacy and educating them about the consequences of sexual activity. The program recruits boys and girls ages 11-12 years old and follows them through high school and beyond. The program is guided by a philosophy that sees youth as "at promise" instead of "at risk" and works to develop a participant's capacity and desire to avoid pregnancy. The program model also provides opportunities for young people to discover interests and develop talents, as well as emphasizing education and employment.

The program includes seven fundamental components:

1. **Education:** Daily and Saturday homework help, remediation, and enrichment with trained teachers and tutors driven by Individual Academic Plans (IAP) for each participant;
2. **Job Club:** Weekly exposure to the "world of work," including earning stipends, opening bank accounts, exploring career choices, and participating in entrepreneurial projects;
3. **Family Life and Sexuality Education (FLSE):** Weekly comprehensive, scientifically accurate sexuality education sessions taught in an age-appropriate fashion by a trained professional;
4. **Self-Expression:** Weekly music, dance, writing, and drama workshops led by theater and art professionals, where children can discover talents and build self-esteem;
5. **Lifetime Individual Sports:** A fitness program emphasizing sports that build self-discipline and can be played throughout life, including golf, squash, swimming, and others;
6. **Full Medical and Dental Care:** Comprehensive, no cost medical and dental services provided in partnership with local providers;
7. **Mental Health Services:** Weekly discussion groups led by certified social workers; individual counseling, case management, and crisis intervention as needed.

The program also includes a Parent Family Life and Sexuality Education program that facilitates a parent's/adult's ability to communicate more effectively with their children about the important family life and sexuality issues.

### **Core Components**

#### **Content Components**

- Must implement the essential elements of all 7 program components – education, job club, FLSE, self-expression, lifetime individual sports, mental health, medical & dental services,
- Essential elements of the education component include: 1) all teens will have an Individual Academic Plan created by the education team, 2) each young person

receives a minimum of one hour of homework help, tutoring, enrichment, and/or remediation at least four times per week, 3) all school report cards and standardized scores are collected from their schools, and 4) academic maintenance activities occur during the summer months and all teens participate in project based learning activities

- Essential elements of the job club components include: 1) each young person opens and maintains a savings account, 2) each young person earns a stipend for job club participation, 3) monthly bank trips enhance lessons on banking, 4) regular entrepreneurial activities teach young people skills that lead to an understanding of small business ownership, 5) community service opportunities, and 6) career exploration evolves over time
- Essential elements of the Family Life & Sexuality Education component include: weekly education sessions throughout the year; age and stage appropriate instruction; emphasis on abstinence throughout the curriculum; encouraging young people to talk with their parents about sexuality; parent family life and sexuality education sessions; reproductive health counseling and care as needed; and young people complete the annual FLSE survey
- Essential elements of the self expression component includes: activities including music, dance, theatre, acting, fine arts, pottery, collage, painting & drawing; opportunities for project-based activities; and weekly participation in self expression activities
- Essential elements of the lifetime individual sports component include: 1) young people learn skills in various lifetime sports such as golf, squash, tennis, martial arts, horseback riding, fencing, and swimming; 2) young people are exposed to at least (2) lifetime individual sports during the program year
- Essential elements of the mental health component include: certified masters level social workers; collaboration with sexuality educators; available year round; and weekly participation in Power Group
- Essential elements of the medical health and dental components include: access to annual, no cost comprehensive medical and dental services; comprehensive physical and oral exams; own primary health care provider; health education; specialty follow-up as needed; urgent care visits

### **Pedagogy Components**

- *Carrera* programs must have dedicated administrative and program space including space to accommodate the Full-time Program Coordinator and Community Organizer, space for component leaders to prepare and store materials, and space with access to IT connections/computers for required data entry/monthly reports.
- *Carrera* program sites must have access to an area that will accommodate all 60+ teens and program staff for fellowship time (dinner/snack), space for teens to place their belongings, a minimum of 4 rooms that can comfortably accommodate a group of 15 teens and component leaders for program rotations, and a private office to conduct individual counseling sessions and/or family meetings.
- *Carrera* programs must hire a full-time program coordinator and a full-time community organizer and at least part-time coordinators to lead each of the component areas.
- *Carrera* programs are required to collect a set of process evaluation and implementation fidelity data specified by the Children's Aid Society and must report the data on a regular basis through the Carrera Management Information System.
- *Carrera* programs are required to sign a contract with the Children's Aid Society that guarantees program staff will receive training, technical assistance, and fidelity

monitoring support from the CAS national training center staff throughout the duration of the program

### **Implementation Components**

- Use a comprehensive, above the waist approach to sexual education and youth development that avoids fragmentation.
- Focus on providing youth with both the capacity and the desire to avoid sexual tragedy.
- Use a family systems approach.
- Consider youth to be “at-promise” instead of “at-risk”.
- Duration of the program (7 years) is critical to success.

### **Target Population**

#### **Target population evaluated**

- Predominantly African American and Hispanic adolescents
- Disadvantaged youth
- Ages of 13-15 at baseline

#### **Potential additional target populations noted by developers**

- Ages 11-12 at baseline through high school years

### **Program Setting**

#### **Program setting evaluated**

- After school

### **Program Duration**

- 7 years

### **Curriculum Materials (identify where to access)**

Curriculum Materials are available from the Children’s Aid Society at <http://stopteenpregnancy.childrengroups.org/>.

### **Adaptations**

No adaptations can be made to the program without approval from the Children’s Aid Society.

### **Program Focus**

*Carrera* focuses on the promotion of youth development.

## **Research Evidence**

- Study Citation:** Philliber, S., Williams Kaye, J., Herrling, S., & West, E. (2002). Preventing pregnancy and improving health care access among teenagers: An evaluation of the *Children's Aid Society-Carrera Program*. *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 34(5), 244–251.
- Study Setting:** Six New York City agencies serving disadvantaged, inner-city populations
- Study Sample:** 484 New York City adolescents recruited by the participating youth agencies
- Age at baseline ranged from 13 to 15
  - 55% female and 45% male
  - 56% African American, 42% Hispanic, 2% some other race or ethnicity
- Study Design:** Randomized controlled trial. Within each of the six participating youth agencies, about half the study participants were randomly selected to participate in the *CAS-Carrera* program and half were randomly selected to participate in each agency's regular youth programs, such recreational activities, homework help, or arts and crafts. Surveys were administered before the program began (baseline) and then annually for three years.
- Study Rating:** The study met the review criteria for a **high** study rating.
- Study Findings:** Three years after the program started:
- Female adolescents participating in the intervention were significantly less likely to report having been pregnant or being sexually active.
  - The study found no statistically significant program impacts on pregnancy or sexual activity for male participants.
- The study also examined program impacts on a measure of dual contraceptive use (condom and a hormonal contraceptive method) at last intercourse. Findings for this outcome were not considered for the review because they did not meet the review evidence standards. Specifically, findings were reported only for subgroups of youth defined by sexual activity at follow up.
- Program impacts were also examined on health care outcomes such as receipt of medical checkups, vaccinations, and dental care. Findings for these outcomes were not considered for the review because they fell outside the scope of the review.

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