National Prevention Strategy

REPRODUCTIVE *and* SEXUAL HEALTH

Healthy reproductive and sexual practices can play a critical role in enabling people to remain healthy and actively contribute to their community. Planning and having a healthy pregnancy is vital to the health of women, infants, and families and is especially important in preventing teen pregnancy and childbearing, which will help raise educational attainment, increase employment opportunities, and enhance financial stability. Access to quality health services and support for safe practices can improve physical and emotional well-being and reduce teen and unintended pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

NATIONAL PREVENTION STRATEGY

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase use of preconception and prenatal care.
2. Support reproductive and sexual health services and support services for pregnant and parenting women.
3. Provide effective sexual health education, especially for adolescents.
4. Enhance early detection of HIV, viral hepatitis, and other STIs and improve linkage to care.

ACTIONS: THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL

- Increase access to comprehensive preconception and prenatal care, especially for low-income and at-risk women.
- Research and disseminate ways to effectively prevent premature birth, birth defects, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Support States, tribes, and communities to implement evidence-based sexual health education.
- Promote and disseminate national screening recommendations for HIV and other STIs.
- Promote and disseminate best practices and tools to reduce behavioral risk factors (e.g., sexual violence, alcohol and other drug use) that contribute to high rates of HIV/STIs and teen pregnancy.
- Encourage HIV testing and treatment, align programs to better identify people living with HIV, and link those who test positive to care.
- Research and disseminate effective methods to prevent intimate partner violence and sexual violence.

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NATIONAL PREVENTION COUNCIL 2010

ACTIONS: PARTNERS CAN

Individuals and Families

- Eat healthfully, take a daily supplement of folic acid, stay active, stop tobacco use and drinking alcohol and see a doctor before and during pregnancy.
- Discuss sexual health history, getting tested for HIV and other STIs, and birth control options with potential partners.
- Notify partner(s) about HIV infection or other STI.
- Discuss sexual health concerns with a health care provider.
- Use recommended and effective prevention methods to prevent HIV and other STIs and reduce risk for unintended pregnancy.
- Communicate with children regarding their knowledge, values, and attitudes related to sexual activity, sexuality, and healthy relationships.
- Make efforts to know where children are and what they are doing and make sure they are supervised by adults in the after-school hours.

Community, Nonprofit, and Faith-Based Organizations

- Support pregnant women in obtaining prenatal care in the first trimester (e.g., transportation services, patient navigators).
- Educate communities, clinicians, pregnant women, and families on how to prevent infant mortality (e.g., nutrition, stress reduction, postpartum and newborn care).
- Promote and offer HIV and other STI testing and enhance linkages with reproductive and sexual health services (e.g. counseling, contraception, HIV/STI testing and treatment).
- Provide information and educational tools to both men and women to promote respectful, nonviolent relationships.
- Promote teen pregnancy prevention and positive youth development, support the development of strong communication skills among parents, and provide supervised after-school activities.

Early Learning Centers, Schools, Colleges, and Universities

- Support medically accurate, developmentally appropriate, and evidence-based sexual health education.
- Support teen parenting programs and assist teen parents in completing high school, which can promote health for both parents and children.
- Provide students with confidential, affordable reproductive and sexual health information and services consistent with Federal, State, and local regulations and laws.
- Implement mentoring or skills-based activities that promote healthy relationships and change social norms about teen dating violence.

Health Care Systems, Insurers, and Clinicians

- Advise patients about factors that affect birth outcomes, such as alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, poor nutrition, stress, lack of prenatal care, and chronic illness or other medical problems.
- Include sexual health risk assessments as a part of routine care; help patients identify ways to reduce risk for unintended pregnancy, HIV, and other STIs; and provide recommended testing and treatment for HIV and other STIs to patients and their partners when appropriate.
- Provide vaccination for hepatitis B virus and human papillomavirus, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.
- Offer counseling and services to patients about the range of contraceptive choices either onsite or through referral consistent with Federal, State, and local regulations and laws.
- Implement policies and procedures to ensure culturally competent and confidential reproductive and sexual health services.

Businesses and Employers

- Provide health coverage and employee assistance programs that include family planning and reproductive health services.
- Provide time off for pregnant employees to access prenatal care.
- Implement and enforce policies that address sexual harassment.

State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Governments

- Increase access to comprehensive preconception and prenatal care, especially for low-income and at-risk women.
- Strengthen delivery of quality reproductive and sexual health services (e.g., family planning, HIV/STI testing).
- Implement evidence-based practices to prevent teen pregnancy and HIV/STIs and ensure that resources are targeted to communities at highest risk.
- Use social marketing, support services, and policies to increase the number of people tested and linked to care for HIV, viral hepatitis, and other STIs.

Find more information at:

Website:
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