

Wise Guys Help Break the Cycle of Teenage Pregnancy

With nearly 10,000 teen pregnancies in NC in 2015, Children's Home Society is ramping up its male-responsibility evidence-based program to curb teen pregnancy

GREENSBORO, NC, USA, June 27, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In 2015, there were nearly 10,000 teenage pregnancies in North Carolina. "Teen parents are less likely to finish high school, less likely to be well employed, and less likely to be in committed and stable relationships," said Rick Brown, Youth Education Program Director at Children's Home Society of North Carolina. "These outcomes are passed on to their children, who may, in turn, grow up and repeat those cycles."

Ramping up its male-responsibility campaign to curb teenage pregnancy, Children's Home Society is expanding the Wise Guys program, targeting teen males, a segment often overlooked and underserved when it comes to addressing teen pregnancy.

"The Wise Guys program empowers young men to make smart decisions regarding relationships," said Brown. "By teaching pregnancy prevention and positive choices, we equip these young men to break detrimental cycles and become supportive, loving boyfriends, husbands, and fathers in the future."

"Wise Guys began in Guilford County, North Carolina. We received a grant to expand, so we're now in eleven counties in the state, plus cities and towns in Arizona, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Louisiana, and New York," said Brown. "The Wise Guys program has been implemented in over 320 communities nationwide."

Charlotte's Myers Park High School, the largest in North Carolina with over 2,800 students, incorporates the Wise Guys curriculum during health class. "The class is very upbeat and interactive,"



Myers Park High students Manpreet Singh, William Miller, and Theodore White CHSNC Educator, Jeff Rothberg (L-R) – Courtesy of CHSNC



Tony Casas, Wise Guys Educator, Greensboro

said 18-year-old graduating senior Will Miller. “While abstinence is taught as the best way, the program teaches everything you need to know. If you choose different options, they want you to be safe. We also engaged in conversations about a wide range of topics, like avoiding the male stereotype, the rape culture, consent, partying, promiscuity, morals, and values.”

“One of the biggest things I got out of Wise Guys is that we see ourselves, young men, in a certain way that isn’t viable to everybody,” said Miller. “What we think a man should be, perhaps shaped by the movie culture or advertising, is not necessarily the best thing.”

“My instructor was very beneficial,” Miller said. “He brought the perfect amount of information and humor for a productive environment. I learned a lot about other people and myself. Wise Guys is one of the courses I will value most coming out of high school.”

Miller’s teacher, Jeff Rothberg, Educator for Children’s Home Society, teaches the Wise Guys program at Myers Park High School, East Mecklenburg High School, community centers in the Charlotte area, and works with youth offenders in Mecklenburg County Jail North.

“I would love to see Wise Guys spread across North Carolina and the nation,” said Rothberg. “The program is evidence-based and effective.” Six-month outcomes shared by Brown reveal significant improvements in student’s knowledge of anatomy and physiology, improved sex role attitudes, improved communication with parents about sex, and increased contraceptive use.

“Children’s Home Society of North Carolina provides training and certification to schools and organizations seeking to offer the Wise Guys program,” said Rothberg. “Funding models vary all over the country with backing provided by cities, towns, counties, state government, foundations, and women’s organizations.”

Wise Guys is available in the following NC counties: Alamance, Forsyth, Gaston, Guilford, Iredell, Johnston, Lenoir, Mecklenburg, Randolph, Rockingham, and Wayne.

“If we teach these boys how to be better young men and avoid the stereotypical traps, they will grow up to have healthier and happier relationships with their partners, with their own children growing up in a stable home,” said Rothberg. “That is the mission of Children’s Home Society of North Carolina, a safe, loving, and permanent home for every child.”

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