Fact Sheet
Young Parents & Education Survey
November 2006

Pregnant and parenting youth face particular challenges as they work to build healthy futures for themselves and their families. In October 2006, several pregnant and parenting youth collaborated with the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health surveyed 120 pregnant and parenting youth to learn about school, self-esteem, discrimination, and their hopes for the future. The results indicate that a large majority of those surveyed believe that it is important to finish high school, live in a safe place, and have medical coverage for their children and themselves. However, many have faced challenges such as discrimination and encouragement to leave school, and nearly all report the need for significant support in order to accomplish their goals.

My life goal is:
“[To] finish high school so I can give an education to my son...”
“To have a career that I love.”
“To keep on going.”

Population:
Of 120 respondents, 117 are women, and 3 are men. 102 are African American, 13 are Latino, and two are Caucasian. The average age of the surveyed youth is 16, with ages ranging from 12 to 18. 60% are pregnant, 34% are parents, and 6% are both pregnant and parenting. 12 of the respondents have more than one child or are expecting their second child. Of those, six report that their second baby has a different parent than their first.

Finishing High School:
• 117 of the 120 respondents are still in school.
• 8% of respondents have been encouraged to leave school.
• 89% of respondents surveyed report that it is “really important” to finish high school.
• 78% of respondents report that they have spoken with someone one-on-one about what they will do after high school.

Discrimination:
• 48% of respondents who are parents report having experienced discrimination because they are parents.
• 46% of respondents report having experienced discrimination because they were pregnant.
• Many students experience discrimination at school because they are pregnant and/or parenting from principals, teachers, and other youth. In addition, pregnant and parenting youth that have faced discrimination report that it comes mostly from their parents and the public.

Future:
• In two years, 62% of respondents see themselves in college, 17% see themselves in high school, 27.5% see themselves working, 4% see themselves living on public aid, and 2% see themselves doing nothing.
• 94% of respondents say that it is “really important” to have a safe place to live.
• 98% of respondents believe that it is “really important” to have medical coverage for themselves and their babies.

Support:
• 61% of the youth surveyed receive some sort of help to stay in school from the other parent of their children, while 26% report that the other parent is not involved, and 6% indicate that the other parent does not support them going to school.
• Nearly 75% of respondents receive help with money, emotional support, and daily life from family members, while 25% receive help with money, emotional support and daily life from their children’s other parent. 30% listed more than one source of support in each of these areas.
• Whatever their goals may be, most pregnant and parenting youth report needing significant support and encouragement from family and friends, as well as help taking care of their children, in order to accomplish their goals.

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